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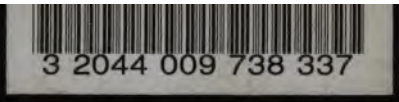

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THE

MORALS OF PLEASURE.

by Mrs. Susan (Ridley) Sedgwick

Maria B. Sedgwick

THE

MORALS OF PLEASURE.

Illustrated by Stories

DESIGNED FOR YOUNG PERSONS.

BY A LADY.

Mêlez l'instruction avec le jeu; que la sagesse ne se montre que par intervalle, et avec un visage riant. FENELON.

PHILADELPHIA:

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To her young Bedford friends, Anna and Maria Jay, this little volume is inscribed, as an expression of affection, by

THE AUTHOR.

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THE

MORALS OF PLEASURE.

MAGICAL MUSIC.

"I AM rejoiced to perceive," said Mrs. Maitland to her friend, Mrs. Wallace, "the sentiment that unites my Anna and your Sabina. In this changing, heartless world, it is delightful to see the friendship of parents perpetuated in their children."

"Yes," replied Mrs. Wallace, mournfully—"and if *you* feel this, who are still in the possession of all your domestic treasures, how much more must *I*, a solitary widow, with an only child? How often when Sabina and I are sitting alone, does dear Anna's animated countenance, and happy voice, breaking in like a sun beam, dispel the clouds that will sometimes settle on us!"

"I think—" said Mrs. Maitland, with the air of one who wished to advise, yet hardly knew how to commence; "I think you make a mistake in your treatment of Sabina—her sensitive nature requires

to be counteracted, not indulged. I sometimes wish," continued she with a smile, "that we could link these two children together—my rattle-pated, thoughtless girl would be much improved by a little of Sabina's delicacy; and she, I think, would be better fitted for a rough world, if she would put on some of Anna's 'armour of proof;' against which, the slight annoyances unavoidable in an intercourse with her fellow beings, would fall harmless. There are so many real evils in life, that a disposition to create imaginary ones, is a serious misfortune."

Mrs. Wallace assented, and frankly admitted the defect in Sabina's character to which Mrs. Maitland so cautiously alluded; adding, as some excuse for it, that the circumstances in which she had been placed, so different from those under which Anna's disposition had been formed, had greatly contributed to it.

She has been my petted ewe lamb," continued she; "and while Anna, in the collisions of a large family, has been compelled to bear and forbear, Sabina's sensibility has been nourished into a disease, by her very exemption from those inconveniences, which at once try and improve the character. The result is, that with the most generous affections, she is often the prey of mere sensitiveness; and her happiness is in the power of every little adverse circumstance;—but what am I to do?"

"Every thing," said Mrs. Maitland, "may be expected from Sabina's really virtuous dispositions, under the influence of a mother so just, as well as so affectionate. As to the immediate agency to be applied, I know nothing better than the discipline which Anna's faults will not fail to administer to those of her friend: like two poisons they will, I trust, neutralize each other. At fourteen, with good intentions and good sense, we must not afflict ourselves, or injure them, by deeming their defects incurable."

Here the conversation was interrupted by the entrance of Anna.

"I thought you had gone to Mrs. Wallace's, my dear," said her mother.

"I left Sabina impatiently expecting you," said Mrs. Wallace.

"I dare say it was impatiently, if at all," replied Anna with a careless laugh—"but I can't help it; I cannot go till I am ready."

"Anna," said her mother, with a reproving look, "you are ready now; why do you not go?"

"I have still one thing to attend to, mother. You never give me credit for half the business on my hands. There has been a terrible commotion in the nursery—Edward and Elizabeth both wanting the same book;—and I promised Edward, if he would

give it up, I would bring him one far prettier. Let me see—Oh! here it is—now I shall be ready in a moment"—and, running up stairs, she adjusted the contested right much to the satisfaction of the parties, and then pursued her way to her friend.

She had not gone far, when an acquaintance accosted her.

"Oh, Anna, you are the very girl I wanted," exclaimed Mary Templeton; "the very girl! I was just on my way to beg you would go with us to see the Panorama of Mexico. They say it is beautiful! Papa directed me to call at his office for him, and there is a gentleman to meet us who has spent several years in Mexico, and who will give us a great many interesting particulars about it."

"Don't speak of it," cried Anna, "'tis too tempting: but I cannot go—I have an engagement with Sabina Wallace, and I have now detained her an hour, I dare say;—so good morning."

"Stay, stay; surely that can't be so important;—besides, the Panorama is to be removed in two days, they say."

"Oh, dear! I am very sorry indeed: I have been wanting excessively to see it; but father has been so busy. There's no use in talking, though; so good by."

"But what great business can you have with Sa-

bina? It seems to me you give up every body for her."

"Why, 'tis nothing very important—I am going with her to choose a new hat;—but she has already waited for me several days."

"Oh, if that's all, it can be done just as well to-morrow. Do, do, Anna, go with us."

"I cannot, I cannot;—Sabina would not like it: she is rather touchy, you know; so I must not think of it."

Mary refrained from farther entreaty, only commending Anna's good-nature, and they parted.

It must, however, be confessed that it was with some difficulty she resisted the proposed gratification. She had recently been reading "Robertson's America;" which, together with the new interests excited by every thing connected with the southern part of our continent, quickened her curiosity to see this beautiful representation of one of its finest cities. When, therefore, she entered Mrs. Wallace's parlour, and Sabina, wearied with waiting, expressed surprise at her delay, she answered rather hastily, that choosing a hat was not, after all, the most important thing in life.

This sounded harshly to Sabina.

"I am sorry you think me so vain," replied she; "an engagement is an engagement—but, had I sus-

pected that it was so disagreeable to you, I should not have insisted on your keeping it."

"It is not disagreeable at all," said Anna, recovering her good-humour—"come, come—let's lose no more time."

On arriving at the milliner's, their choice was distracted between *cottage* bonnets, whose costly materials contrasted strangely with the simplicity of the name, and *Bolivar* hats, an appellation as little in accordance with the pretty delicate girl, on whose head the adroit Madame Bailleul was placing one, giving it just the right set.

Still this was not exactly *the thing*.

"*Ah, voila!*" exclaimed Madame, pointing to another, "*Voila un chapeau pour tourner la tête d'une jeune demoiselle!—mettez, mettez—c'est le gout dominant.*"

In the twinkling of an eye it was on Sabina's head, her curls arranged to give it the proper effect, and the glass appealed to, as an incontrovertible witness in its favour.

"*Regardez-vous Mademoiselle dans le miroir —cela vous va à merveille!*"

But Sabina was not easily suited.

"*Cela ne me plait pas, non plus, Madame,*" replied she, timidly, feeling as little confidence in her own French as approbation of Madame's hat.

Another and another were recommended, some by Anna, some by Madame, but in vain.

The perplexed milliner shrugged her shoulders.

"*Mademoiselle est trop difficile.*"

'Madame's right for once!' thought Anna.

"*Ayez la bonté, Mademoiselle, de choisir ce qui vous flatte le plus—Je ne sais que faire.*"

At last the important decision was made, and a hat purchased, which Madame had not ventured to produce herself, but which, on Sabina's requesting to look at it, she pronounced, "*un chapeau à voir! fort à la mode.*"

Some alterations were, however, necessary, and Madame having promised to make them, and to send it home "*ce soir, sans faute,*" they left the shop.

The Panorama became the subject of their conversation; and Sabina having expressed an earnest desire to see it, Anna determined to beg her father would take them the next day; but, unwilling to excite an expectation which might be disappointed, forbore to mention her intention. They parted, and Anna did not forget at dinner to present her request. Mr. Maitland consented, and the time being arranged, a note was sent in the afternoon to beg Sabina would accompany them. She was not

at home, but the note was delivered to Mrs. Wallace; of course she would receive it.

The next morning, at eleven o'clock, the time appointed, Sabina did not appear.—Anna waited a quarter of an hour—her father was precise—Mrs. Wallace's was entirely out of the way—she had no time to call there;—and, concluding that Sabina could not go, she proceeded without her to meet her father, as he had directed.

After a delightful hour passed in viewing the picture, as they were returning they met Sabina.

"Oh!" exclaimed Anna, "how much you have lost!—there never was any thing so magnificent;—it is the finest Panorama I ever saw."

"Indeed!—I'm glad you liked it," replied Sabina, gravely, and passed on.

"What is the matter with your friend, Anna?" inquired Mr. Maitland: "I thought she looked coldly on you. You have not, I hope, offended her intentionally."

"'Tis quite impossible to understand Sabina's looks, father;—the merest trifle will sometimes wound her; and at others, when I have supposed her displeased, and have inquired the reason, I have found her only low-spirited:—this is probably the case now, for I am very certain that I have done *nothing to offend* her."

"Low spirits! that's an uncommon complaint at her age. You, I believe, Anna, are not often attacked by it."

"No, indeed! not very often."

"I am glad to perceive, however, that notwithstanding a difference of temper, you are good friends."

"Yes, that we are—I love Sabina with all my heart: her only fault is, that she is too apt to take offence, and to doubt my affection."

"And what fault can she allege against you, to balance the account?"

"Oh! a hundred, I dare say."

"Some of which, of course, you must admit;—and, if so, I trust that you are willing to bear with her *only* one, which, though a defect, generally belongs to a character of susceptibility and capacity. She is, you know, the child of one of my earliest friends; and I should be grieved if you regarded her otherwise than as a sister."

Anna, in a softened tone, declared that she had always so considered her; and having reached their own door, the conversation ceased.

For several days there was no intercourse between the girls. Anna was necessarily occupied at home; but it being a season of vacation at Sabina's school, who had at all times more leisure than herself, she

wondered that she did not call as usual. At length she could bear it no longer, and filling her bag with work for the evening, she went to pass it with her friend. On her entrance, instead of the usual cordial greeting, Sabina received her coldly and formally; and Anna, provoked at being so treated, was half disposed to return immediately:—but kinder thoughts prevailed.

"She'll get over it soon," thought she, "if I take no notice of it."

She opened her bag, took out her work, and talked away as usual.—Sabina was very civil, as girls are apt to be when most offended, but there was evidently something wrong. Mrs. Wallace entered, and tea passed in the same unsatisfactory manner.

"As you have Anna with you," said Mrs. Wallace, "I shall run away a little while this evening, to see my neighbours;—I have negleeted them sadly of late."

The little work-table being placed between them, the girls resumed their sewing, and there was a long pause.

Anna's patience was at last quite spent.

"Sabina Wallace," she exclaimed, "I should like to know what is the matter with you!—Are *you* sick, sorry, or angry? If the first, take medi-

cine,—if the second, take comfort,—and, if the last, take my hand;—for I suppose you are offended with me, if with any body, though I am sure I can't tell for what."

Sabina coloured, looked ashamed, but made no reply. She seemed to think, as is frequently the case, that "the matter," though sufficient to feel and to resent, was too small to mention. Anna was not, however, to be baffled.

"When I am displeased," said she, "I always speak out at once; and I'll break friendship with you, Sabina, if you will not do the same."

By dint of entreaties and teasing, she at last ascertained, that it had appeared inexplicable to Sabina, why Anna, knowing her great desire to see the Panorama, should not have invited her to accompany her and her father. This led to a farther explanation;—the note had been forgotten by her mother, and was at this moment snugly tucked away in the card-rack, where, after some search, Sabina found it—of course Anna was justified.

"Now, Sabina, don't you see," said she, "how much better it is to tell at once, if any thing appears wrong, than to smother it all up, just to burn your own breast?"

Sabina admitted it, and, like two reconciled lovers, their short-lived coldness served but to give

increased interest to their renewed intercourse. After passing a happy evening they parted, having agreed that the next day at half past twelve, Sabina should call for Anna to accompany her in a Broadway promenade. At the hour appointed they met, but they had not walked far, before Anna, turning suddenly to Sabina, exclaimed, "I wonder you could buy that hat!—I am sure you looked long enough to make a better choice."

"Why so?" said Sabina, "I'm sure you said it was pretty."

"So it is—but not for you—what's pretty for one person is not for another—*you* should never wear blue, you are so *very* dark."

Sabina was not vain, though she had beauties enough to compensate for a dark complexion. Mortified vanity, therefore, was not the emotion produced by this observation; but she was pained that Anna should have been so indifferent, as to see her purchase any thing unfriendly to her appearance without a word to prevent it.

"You should have mentioned that at the time,—or,"—"not at all," she would have added, but Sabina was as careful of her own expressions as she thought others should be of theirs; and she suppressed what seemed to her nicer feeling a rude reply.

"I *would* have mentioned it," answered Anna, carelessly, "to any one but you—but I don't always know, Sabina, how *you* will take advice."

This, of course, did not mend the matter;—Sabina was silent,—but Anna soon perceived the effect of what she had said. This time, however, she was resolved that Sabina should take her own way, and "come to" when it pleased her. Their walk was joyless, and soon terminated. When about to separate, Anna invited her friend to take tea with her, saying that she had a beautiful collection of paintings to show her;—Sabina having no excuse, and unwilling to refuse without one, consented, and in the evening they were again together. After the tea-things were removed, a folio volume of flowers, very accurately drawn and coloured, was produced, and Sabina, much interested in them, for a while forgot her pique at Anna. Leaf after leaf disclosed new beauties, and the younger children in raptures crowded round for explanations.

"Do not flowers, Anna, sometimes remind you of persons?" said Sabina.

"Oh, yes, often—here, Ned, is one this minute that is your counterpart."

"Where? where?" cried Edward.

"Here, this scarlet *snap-dragon*, you fiery rogue."

Ned, to verify the resemblance, gave his sister an uncourteous salute on the ear, which she returned by rubbing both of his, until they were as red as the flower itself.

"And here," said Sabina to a pretty child at her elbow, "is one the very picture of you, dear fair little Lizzy, when you are snugly wrapped up in your nice green silk cloak—this sweet lily of the valley, just showing its head between its large protecting leaves."

"John, my little sly-boots," said Anna, "here's a *fox-glove* for *you!*"

"See if I don't find a *teazle* for *you*, Anna," retorted John, laughingly.

"Very well, John—very well," replied Anna; and turning the leaf, a jonquil appeared.

"Oh that reminds me," continued Anna, "of a line in that pretty little poem, *La Fête de la Rose:*

'Sprightly Miss Jonquil, a sweet-scented dame.'

And don't that, by the way, Sabina, make you think of Emily Morris, who declared that she lived on perfumes?"

"Not so much as this—

'Myrtle with blossoms, all white like a bride,'

puts me in mind of your pretty cousin, the night she was married."

"Here, as I live!" cried Anna, "are

'Low-bred nasturtiums, whom nobody knew;'

Oh! the very fac-simile of those vulgar Smiths who annoyed us so much at the last Public."

"Anna!"—said Sabina in an expostulatory tone.

"Nonsense!" replied her careless friend. "It was bad enough to be persuaded by you to dance in the same cotillon with them then; I certainly shall not pay them any respect now. I dare say, before I 've done I shall find a striking likeness, too, of that piece of affectation, Miss Osgood,—who was so refined she could scarcely see, speak, or move; and just languidly glanced round her little gray eyes, as if it were so shockingly ill-bred to be happy."

"This laburnum," said Sabina, not replying to Anna's remark, "with its streaming blossoms, makes me think of Susan Allison's beautiful yellow hair."

"*Yellow!*—now, Sabina, that 's too much; it is red, absolutely red."

A debate ensued, which being referred to Mrs. Maitland, she decided that Miss Allison's hair was precisely of that hue which the poets had taken under their especial protection, had denominated it "golden," and that it was sacrilege to call it *red.*

In this manner they ran nearly through the book, perceiving, or contriving resemblances from the most remote and fantastic associations. Anna's love

of the ridiculous was stimulated by Sabina's more correct and guarded manner, till vexed at her refusal to participate, she unfortunately turned her eye to a flower that furnished her an opportunity of venting the feeling:

"The *sensitive* plant hoped her friend would excuse her,"

said she, with a glance at Sabina which left her at no loss for the application.

The dissatisfaction which had been lulled by the amusement of the evening was awakened and increased; and Sabina, though resolved to take no notice of it then, could not but reflect,—"'Tis always so! Anna loses no opportunity of giving me pain. I deserve it, however, for putting myself in her power."—She succeeded tolerably well in concealing her feelings, but in a short time took her leave. Anna nevertheless suspected the fact, but irritated in her turn she determined she would take no pains to soothe her.

"We may as well break at once," said she, "as to have these eternal differences and explanations. I love Sabina, but I cannot be for ever on my best behaviour with her."

In this spirit she refrained from visiting her friend for a few days; and in the mean time, Sabina, by an imprudent exposure to cold, operating in conjunc-

tion with a predisposition to fever, became so sick as to be confined to her room. Mrs. Wallace proposed to send for Anna to enliven her, but she forbade it. Unwilling to expose what she thought Anna's unkindness, even to her mother, she said, what was indeed true, that she preferred to be alone; "for she cannot but know that I am sick," she reflected, "and if she will not come without sending, I certainly do not desire to see her by asking the favour."

The third day her disorder assumed a more alarming appearance, and entire quiet was prescribed. From a state of great nervous excitement and restlessness, during which, for many days, she could obtain no repose, she sunk into a stupor still more fearful, and her poor mother was nearly distracted. For six-and-thirty hours the most serious apprehensions were entertained, at the end of which, favourable indications appeared; and at length roused, like one awaking from a deep sleep, she beheld her mother,—her head resting on Anna's shoulder,—and both intently regarding her. A tranquil and natural smile assured them of her restored consciousness.

"Dear mother! dear Anna!" were the first words she uttered. Mrs. Wallace, scarcely knowing what she did, fell on her knees beside the bed—an in-

stinctive expression of her gratitude; and Anna, though hitherto self-controlled, and active in every little office by which she could render herself useful, overcome by this sudden and joyful transition, laughed and cried alternately.

Sabina, as soon as she was permitted to converse, learned the affectionate attentions of Anna;—that though at first obliged to abstain from visiting her by the commands of the physician, during this last and most alarming stage of the disorder she had never left her an instant. Anna's assiduities did not abate with the danger of her friend—she left her only for her necessary repose and refreshment; and, having obtained a promise of being admitted to Sabina's room whenever, and as long as she pleased, nothing could divert her from her post.

Sabina recovered rapidly, and for some weeks every thing went on smoothly;—Anna was kind and considerate, Sabina grateful and reasonable,—and it seemed as if no cloud could again rise to obscure their intercourse. If sometimes from habit and temperament Anna would forget herself, and Sabina would wince at her careless and thoughtless manner, such was her sense of Anna's late kindness, that she would not permit her former troublesome sensibilities to overcome her strong conviction of her friend's attachment. Restraint was indeed more

easy to her than to Anna; for while she had found her feelings a treacherous guide, betraying her into injustice towards others, and inflicting causeless suffering on herself,—Anna reflected, that as she never meant to give pain, that as, on the contrary, she was always ready to promote Sabina's happiness, and had proved it too, it was absurd to magnify trifles. With this self-approving sentiment, it was exceedingly vexatious to be subjected to a constant watchfulness, foreign to her temper, or to have her fidelity and affection called in question. She did not yet understand, that affection, precious as it is in itself, acquires yet greater value by a delicate attention to the feelings of its object,—as grace gives new charms to beauty.

It so happened one day, when Anna was becoming rather uneasy, under the greater restraint she had of late imposed on herself, and had in a walk to Mrs. Wallace's wrought herself into some irritation by her reflections on the subject, that as soon as she entered the parlour, Sabina exclaimed earnestly, but not pettishly, "Oh, Anna! how could you tell uncle George that I was studying Spanish?"

Now this remonstrance, at any other time, Anna would have answered in her usually playful, or careless manner, but it took her at an unlucky moment, and she answered quickly, "Why not?—Why

shouldn't I tell him? I'm sure there's no harm in *that.*"

"No, certainly, not the least harm—but I wished to surprise him with my progress, and meant to keep it a profound secret."

"A secret!" repeated Anna, impatiently; "who but you, Sabina, would have thought of making a mystery of such a thing as that? You are just like the man in Molière's play, that we were reading yesterday, who made a secret even of '*bon jour.*' I cannot undertake to keep the secrets of such a person."

Poor Sabina! she had not spoken in anger herself, nor had she the slightest apprehension of calling forth such a reproof; and conscious, too, of having made virtuous efforts to correct what she began to regard as her defects, she could not endure this unjust rebuke.

"I shall not trouble you with any more, Anna," said she, "since the burden is so grievous."

"I am glad to hear it," replied Anna, now entirely off her guard, and rejoiced again to use her unruly little tongue freely. "I am glad to hear it: it is a great deal better to speak out, and have done with it. If you choose to withdraw your confidence, I shall not seek it, I assure you;" and turning hastily away, she left the house.

Sabina was much hurt—but so strong was the impression on her heart of Anna's kindness on former occasions, that she would probably have sought a reconciliation, but from an unfortunate visit the next day from Mary Templeton,—who, though not malignant, was, from a dangerous propensity to gossip, often the cause of as much mischief as if really worse disposed.

"You are so devoted to Anna Maitland," said she, "that you have given us all up for her."

Sabina looked troubled, and made no reply.

"I suppose you see each other every day," continued Mary.

"No, not *every* day," said Sabina, desirous of concealing their recent disagreement, yet unable to command her countenance, which betrayed enough to excite Mary's curiosity.

"I am sure," said she, with an inquisitorial glance, "Anna cannot have done any thing to offend you, for she seemed very much afraid of you."

"*Afraid* of me!" repeated Sabina with much surprise.

"I mean afraid of displeasing you," said Mary.

"But why?—how?—what do you mean by that?" said Sabina.

"Oh, nothing very particular—only I remember her saying that she could not do this, and could not

do that, because you would not like it, for that you were very touchy."

This was the unkindest thing of all.

'Oh, Anna!' thought Sabina, 'to make my faults a subject of remark to another! I would not have treated you so;' and, unable longer to control herself, she burst into tears.

Mary officiously strove to console her; but Sabina carefully suppressed every expression of wronged and indignant affection, and Mary was obliged to leave her without satisfying her curiosity, or comprehending how much pain she had inflicted. This proved the most serious rupture they had ever yet had, and for a long time both parties, equally offended, desired no accommodation. Their mothers perceived the change, but thinking that the fermentation would work off better if they did not interfere, they left them to themselves. As resentment cooled, the sense of privation quickened, and they would at length almost have given their pretty eyes to be friends again—a blessing they valued the more, as it now appeared irrecoverable.

'"Tis out of the question,' mournfully thought Sabina. 'Anna has in the most unprovoked manner rejected me for ever—I cannot, cannot, beg her to receive me again.'

"No, never! never!" exclaimed Anna to a mutual

friend, Isabella Newton, "never will I make any more advances to Sabina—I told her I should not seek her confidence again, and I 'll keep my word. I might as well confess myself her slave for life—it may be hard to give her up, but it is harder to be for ever on the watch."

"Well, well," said Isabella, "I will not urge you to do, or say any thing—though, considering that I am the oldest, and am the friend of both, I think you might let me advise;—I will only ask that you will meet Sabina at our house to-morrow evening."

"What, alone!—no, that I will not—she 'll think it all a contrivance of mine."

"No, no, not alone; there may be a dozen, or more if you choose, but only do you come."

Anna, who really longed to see Sabina again, whom she had only passed in the street, or seen at church, since their unhappy difference, was persuaded without much difficulty to comply with Isabella's wish; who, having secured that point, went to obtain a like promise from Sabina. This she feared would not be so easy; but Sabina made no inquiry as to the guests, and Isabella wisely avoided all information on that subject. When, therefore, Sabina encountered Anna's eye at Mrs. Newton's, the next evening, her countenance evinced both surprise and emotion:—nor were these unmingled with

resentment, as she saw her engage immediately in conversation with her usually gay manner, as if entirely regardless of her presence. This was conduct of which Sabina was incapable, and she could not understand it in another.

'Either she has no feeling,' thought she, 'or she never had any real affection for me.'

Their kind entertainer proposed all kinds of pleasures, in the hope that some one of them would elicit a word, or look, which might advance her views—but in vain. Amusing caricatures were introduced,—Anna laughed, but Sabina could not. Charades, enigmas, were next resorted to, but with no better success;—Sabina, dispirited and vexed, could guess nothing. At last a mischievous little girl proposed the "four elements,"—but neither fire, air, earth, nor water, could extract from Sabina more than a languid smile. She was in short out of *her* element, and would have returned home, had she not feared to incur the charge of ill-humour.

But as the benevolent are, thank Heaven! sometimes as wilfully bent on good, as the malicious on evil, Isabella persisted. She saw that Anna was well disposed, if her pride could only be saved, and as a last resort, suggested the amusement of "Magical Music."

As our young readers may not be acquainted with

this play, it will not be superfluous perhaps to describe it. One of the party having left the room. the rest decide what that person is to do:—on a signal, he or she returns, and music furnishes the only clue to the prescribed duty, which is seldom discovered without repeated trials;—when the air is faint, it intimates that the individual is on a wrong pursuit, and as it becomes louder and louder, it announces an approach to success.

"Sabina," said Isabella, "you shall go out;—you are so sober to night, you want something to wake you—let's see if my guitar can't move you."

Sabina, glad of any relief from her present constraint, complied, and having waited in the hall a few seconds, she was summoned;—as she entered the parlour, the music commenced:—

And gently falls the timid touch,
Careful lest it should wake too much
The speaking chords. They only say,
"Still from the mark you 're wide astray."
Fainter, and fainter yet, the strain,
As if it ne'er could rise again.
With wavering step Sabina moves,
The warning notes with care improves:
"Not there," she thinks, "not there must I
"My fortune or my genius try;"
And, turning, listens to the air
As if a spirit whisper'd there!

It gently swells—her tuneful ear
Catches the indication clear,
And follows quickly where it guides;
But soon again it fades—subsides;
And baffled, blushing, laughing, vex'd,
She knows not where to venture next,
While twenty merry voices cry,
"Courage, Sabina! further try."
Rous'd as a wood-nymph in the chase,
Hope sparkles in her kindling face,
And turning gaily quickly round,
The music says, "The track is found!"
She follows—still it louder grows,
And proudly, fearlessly, she goes.
But what arrests her—while is thrown
The full, unerring, guiding tone?
On, on, Sabina! mark you not
How near the goal at last you're got?
And now asham'd, with reckless tread
She onward moves just where she's led,
Till fronting Anna, full she stands
To do whate'er the tune demands.
First she with cold, averted face
A court'sy drops—Anna the grace
Returns not—though there seems the while
The will to do it, in her half-form'd smile.
It will not do—the soft guitar
Asks more than that, Sabina, far.
Then from a vase of fragrant flowers,
That through the room rich perfume pours.
She plucks with hasty hands a rose,—
But faint the chiding music grows.

Impatiently she casts it down,
And throws a curious glance around;
"What can it be? what odious task
Have they imposed?" she seems to ask.
Then, with reluctant hand, essays
To adjust a lock that careless strays
On Anna's lovely cheek—but no,
The music-spirit says not so.
The bracelet then she would undo,
A dying strain forbids *that* too.
"The necklace! is it that?" she cries,
While melting feelings fill her eyes.
But still the fading air again,
Forbids to move the golden chain.
And now their attitude is such,
That almost do their faces touch;
While Anna's eye, with meaning fraught,
Instructs Sabina's rapid thought.
She bends—and now the music's swell
Loudly her near approach doth tell;
Ah, see! their glowing lips have met,
And friendship's seal again is set!
While quick proclaims th' applauding sound
That what was sought at last is found!

The delight of Isabella at this moment equalled that of the reconciled friends, affording her benevolent effort its just reward; and as the good feelings of all present had become interested in the issue of her friendly stratagem, its success gave universal

satisfaction, and the remainder of the evening was spent in great cheerfulness.

Some time after this occurrence, as Sabina was passing the morning at Mrs. Maitland's, Anna said to her, "I do not think, Sabina, we have had a single falling out since Isabella Newton's party."

"There must certainly have been some *magic* in her music," replied Sabina, laughing.

"I should rather say, my dear girls," said Mrs. Maitland, "that the *magic* consists in your having determined not to exact from one another too rapid an improvement; and that since you cannot yet be *without* faults, you have resolved to love each other *with* them.—Persevere in this wise toleration, and you cannot fail to derive from it the most precious advantages. Self-control, the spring of all our virtues, is thus called into habitual exercise; and while you think that you are only forbearing to the defects of others, you are unconsciously correcting your own."

TWELFTH NIGHT.

"MOTHER," asked Edward Harrison, "are not all English people prejudiced?"

"What a sweeping and illiberal reproach, that question implies, for a tolerably intelligent boy of twelve years of age!" exclaimed Mrs. Harrison: "what can have put that into your head?"

"Nothing—I don't know," replied he, somewhat rebuked by his mother's manner; and, exchanging looks with his sister Emma, they remained silent. Mrs. Harrison observed, however, that there was some subject of interest occupying them, and, closing her book, she endeavoured to draw it forth.

"What is the reason, Emma, that your young English friend, Clara Stanhope, is with you less frequently than formerly? Until very lately, you could have no pleasure unless she shared it with you. Your walks to Laurel Hill were insipid, your moonlight rambles tiresome, if she were not at your side.—I can't bear caprice."

Again a look of intelligence passed between the children.

"As for you, Edward," continued his mother, laughing, "you had become quite a beau since Clara's arrival: I am afraid your new-born graces will droop without her smiles."

"Edward," said Emma, who, being two years younger, entertained a becoming respect for the more enlarged understanding of her brother, "Edward do *you* tell mother."

Edward tied a knot in the corner of his handkerchief, snapped it, bit it, half laughed, and remained silent; but Emma, with a true feminine taste for communication, could no longer keep the secret.

"We have quarrelled, mother—that's all."

"Quarrelled! that's all! that's a great deal too much. But what could you possibly find to quarrel about?"

"Why," said Edward, recovering from the mortification of the disclosure, and feeling a little important as his thoughts reverted to the subject of controversy, "'twas about my country, Ma'am."

"Mercy on us!" exclaimed his mother, "what a doughty champion you are! And pray, Sir, what demands can your country have made on you already?"

Edward, having got thus far, felt emboldened to proceed.

"I don't think I ought to hear it abused, if I am a boy."

"No, indeed, mother," said Emma, "I am sure that would not be right."

"And did you, my gentle little daughter, did you too fight for your country?"

"I did what I could, to be sure, mother," replied she, "but Edward did the most."

"That is, he extended his shield before you, and you peppered the enemy in true bo-peep style.—But come, to be serious, let me hear what all this amounts to—you know my opinion of quarrels."

"Well, then," said Edward, stoutly, "Clara says that the Americans know nothing but what they get from England;—that they have not as good manners as the English;—and she calls our great Revolution a *Rebellion*."

"Let me see—these are grave charges.—As to the first, I must confess she is more than half right;—as to the second, that, in fairness, I think should be left to a third party to decide;—and, as to our Revolution, Edward, that will best defend itself, take my word for it; so I see no ground for a quarrel thus far.—But let us hear what you said."

"Yes, yes," cried Emma, "tell mother what you said, Edward, *that* was excellent."

"Why, I told her there was one thing, at least, that they could not teach us, and that was how to fight;—that, as to our manners, we had too much to be always boasting of them;—and that if our Revolution was a Rebellion, then George the Third was a usurper, and if so, we were not bound to obey him."

"George the Third a usurper! how do you make that out, Edward?"

"Didn't he derive his power from Queen Anne mother? and didn't she and her sister Mary take it from their own father?"

"This is pretty well for boy's logic—I could, however, show you its weak points, but we will not stop for that now—was there any thing more said?"

"Yes—Emma said something," continued Edward, in a less assured tone, "about 'she would not think that Clara would like to keep company with *rebels*,'—and I—I said, that I supposed she wanted us to fall down and worship her, because she was *English*."

"Oh, terrible! terrible! a downright attack on herself! how could a boy of your politeness make such a mistake?"

Edward looked mortified, and Emma hung her head.

"And what then took place?" asked Mrs. Harrison.

"Oh, then she was quite angry, and went away without saying any more."

"'Tis no wonder.—I am really sorry that you should both have forgotten yourselves so far, as to suffer mere general reflections to run into personalities."

"Well, I can't help it now," said Edward.

"No, we can't help it now," said Emma.

"But, my dear children, you both owe Clara an apology."

"She began first, mother," said Emma.

"I have no objection," said Edward, after some reflection, "to make an apology, if I have done wrong;—but it will do no good."

Mrs. Harrison was silent a few moments.

"Upon second thoughts," said she, "that is making it too formal a matter. Next Thursday is Twelfth Night—you shall have a party, and Clara shall be your Queen."

"Clara, Queen!" exclaimed Emma, "she who gets the ring is Queen—how can we choose?"

"Ah! Emma, many a Queen has been made by

arts less innocent than those we shall use! I shall find a way to attain my purpose."

"But you can't, mother, you can't," continued Emma, earnestly—"Clara will not come;—she does not speak to us now when she meets us,—I do not believe she'll even answer the invitation."

"I tell you she will come, and she shall be Queen, and a gracious one too;—I'll wager the value of her crown upon it."

"Ah, well, mother," said Emma, with a look at Edward, "we know Clara better than you do."

Here the conversation was interrupted by the entrance of company. In the afternoon Mrs. Harrison despatched a polite note requesting the favour of Mr. and Mrs. Stanhope, and family, to pass the ensuing Thursday evening at her house; and as Edward and Emma were arranging themselves at their employments after tea, an answer was returned.

"There!" said Mrs. Harrison, after having read it, "there, didn't I tell you so?—they'll all come;—that's one point gained."

"They may come," said Edward, "but she wo'n't be Queen, I know."

The next day was occupied with the necessary preparations, regalia, &c. &c.; and Edward, though

thinking it labour lost, sat himself seriously to work to commit to memory some lines written by his mother for the occasion.

Thursday evening arrived, and the children, in spite of their apprehensions that Clara would spoil their sport, caught the spirit of the time.

Emma's toilet having received the finishing touch, she descended to the parlour, where Edward was practising, before a large mirror, the most appropriate gestures for his address.

"Gracious," she exclaimed, "how beautiful and light the room is! Oh! Edward, if we could but have a dance, too!"

"Yes, that would be charming! but I'm sure mother has done a great deal for us without that;—if every one will only do their part as well—but a dance!—why did you speak of it?"

The arrival of the company checked the expression of their growing wishes; and when a sufficiently large party of the young people had assembled to constitute a *regular nomination*, Mrs. Harrison announced her plan, which was highly approved; and this important matter was just settled as Mrs. Stanhope and her family entered.

Clara, all unconscious of the honours that awaited her, retained just enough of her own displeasure

to give a very becoming dignity to her manner. Her full dark eye was averted from Edward and Emma, as soon as she had coldly returned their salutation; yet an expression about her pretty mouth seemed to say, 'I am not so much offended as I would appear.'

"She looks like a Queen, doesn't she?" whispered Edward to Emma.

"I'm sure I don't know how a *Queen* looks," replied Emma; "but I suppose she does."

"If she accepts the crown, I wonder whom she will choose for her King," said Edward.

"Charles Merton is the largest boy," answered Emma, looking around.

"Oh, she wo'n't choose him, I know. If she takes any, it will be George Somers; he is half *English*," you know, said Edward, significantly;—"but I forget—I must go out till it is time for the address."—And he left the room to await his mother's signal.

In the mean time, refreshments were offered to the company; and many a sly look and whisper might have revealed some secret expectation, but Clara remained in unsuspecting gravity; till, at the proper moment, Edward made his re-appearance, and pronounced the following lines:

Fair ladies, and good gentles all,
Who kindly have obey'd our call,
Our youthful merriment to share,
We now our mimic court prepare.
In olden time, blind Chance decided
By whom the sceptre should be guided;
She, whom *her* whim for Queen design'd,
Within a cake the ring must find:
But we, as our own forms direct,
Proceed our sov'reign to *elect*.
Tho' all unskill'd in courtly ways,
The great to fear, the proud to praise,
Columbia's daughters, frank and free,
To love the *stranger*, all agree.
In every bright and laughing eye,
Assent and pleasure I espy.
Then low to Clara, thus I bring,
As chosen Queen, the twelfth-night ring!
Now deign, as ancient rules declare,
To say what youth your throne shall share;
And as your trusty knight profess'd,
I 'll proudly bear your high behest.

Edward rose from the kneeling attitude in which he had offered the ring, and stood, not ungracefully, to receive Clara's reply. Her resentment, never long-lived, was now completely subdued; yet, shrinking behind her elder sister, she uttered not a word.

'Yes,' thought Edward, 'I knew it would be so—a pretty fool I look like!'

"Come, come, Clara," cried her father, "you must confer the *crown matrimonial*—say quickly on whom."

In a soft voice, little above a whisper, she pronounced 'Edward Harrison.'

Surprised and delighted by this generous reception, Edward, with the respect and courtesy of a *preux chevalier*, again kneeled, then rising, took her fair plump little hand;—it lay unresistingly in his, and he led her in triumph, followed by all the children, to the room where their court and costume were to be arranged. A bright diadem was then placed on Clara's brow, contrasting well with her rich brown hair. Edward's glossy curls were partly concealed by a black velvet cap and feathers, in Harry the Eighth's style, relieved by a brilliant ornament in front. Globes, sustaining sceptres, were placed in their hands, and their nobles were arranged with as much regard to precedence, as if regulated by a court calendar: *rank* being a matter about which the little *republicans* were rather testy.

Immediately behind the Queen was placed sweet little Catharine Sedley, the youngest maid of honour; whose hand was gallantly held by William Preston, the favourite page. At the instant when they were about to return in procession to the parlour, a march burst forth from a band of music adroitly concealed.

His majesty, at this joyous surprise, absolutely sprung half a yard from the floor, a departure from etiquette by which he well nigh lost his crown: the Queen's sceptre trembled in her hand with the delightful agitation of that moment, and it was some time before they could reduce their tripping feet to the grave measure of the march.

On re-entering the parlour, they found that the opportunity of their absence had been improved to erect the throne. This was placed in front of a fine collection of green-house plants, which, nearly reaching the ceiling, formed a canopy in harmony with the artless, happy creatures who were to repose beneath it. To this seat Edward handed his smiling Queen, and her lords, ladies, and pages were grouped around her, like loves around the car of Venus.

In a few moments the drawing-room doors were thrown open, and the musician 'changed his hand' to an air so merry, that every little foot instinctively beat time to it; and the King, unable longer to endure the restraints of royalty, led her majesty to the dancing room. And now never were lighter steps or merrier hearts! The bright eyes of the Queen shone most graciously on all, and the graceful plumes of the King bent in courtesy, or waved in keeping with the tune. Emma, who had the

cumbrous dignity of a Duchess to sustain, lost it in the first 'right and left,' and could not find it again during the whole evening. Earls and Countesses did no better—pages and maids of honour grew presuming—in short, it was rumoured, that too much *ardent spirits* had been introduced, and that the whole court were *intoxicated.* But if there were not as much decorum as is, or ought to be found among great folks, they could boast of what, it is to be feared, is a rare occurrence in palaces—that the evening concluded without one dissatisfied heart!

The next morning, at the breakfast table, Mrs. Harrison inquired of her children if they had enjoyed the evening.

"Oh, yes!" they both answered in a breath—"it was delightful! delightful! and you were quite right, mother, in regard to Clara. She was as pleasant as possible, and did not seem to remember any thing that had passed."

"No one, certainly, could have behaved better," replied Mrs. Harrison, "notwithstanding the implacability you ascribed to her. I think," continued she, "you will hardly again suffer such trifles to disturb your tempers, or interrupt your intercourse. Clara is a generous, warm-hearted girl; and if she has a prejudice against us, or our country,

is it not better to overcome it by kindness, than to confirm it by rudeness? *She* expresses, perhaps hastily, an offensive sentiment, *you* retaliate it; this is again retorted, and thus a hostile spirit is fostered. Forbearance and kind construction would not only prevent this evil, but produce much good. She has seen something of an *old* world, of which you know nothing; you have been reared thus far in a *new* one, which, if somewhat rude or unpolished, is full of vigour and originality. The different associations which thus exist in your minds, would render you useful companions to each other, if you compare your observations in the spirit of kindness, and not invidiously."

"Let me," said Mr. Harrison, "extend the lesson your mother has endeavoured to inculcate, somewhat further. Nations, you know, consist of men and women, boys and girls;—the sentiments, therefore, that these individually cherish, become the character of the whole people. There are some mistakes on the subject of prejudice, which, even at your age, should be rectified. Many persons, on both sides, contend, that between us and the English, there is none;—that two virtuous and enlightened nations cannot but do justice to each other. It appears to me that, however desirable, this is not exactly so; and for this there are sufficient reasons.

Two wars, one for independence, the other to settle long disputed rights, must necessarily have engendered *prejudice;* and the sooner we acknowledge this, and endeavour to correct it, the sooner the evil will be remedied. There are others who admit the fact, but who contend for it as for a virtue. You would not esteem it a merit to entertain a prejudice against an individual:—value yourself as little on national prejudice—the fruitful source of misconstruction, injustice, and war; and believe, that respect paid to the rights of other countries, is a service rendered to your own."

LE SECRÉTAIRE.

"HARRIET," said Mrs. Thurston, "do you recollect, that in a month from to-morrow is our examination?"

"Oh! yes, Madam," replied Harriet, carelessly.

"I should not have imagined that you did, however," said Mrs. Thurston, gravely, "were I to judge by your recitations."

The conscious girl looked disconcerted. After a moment's pause, Mrs. Thurston continued:

"It grieves me to be obliged, so often, Harriet, to remonstrate against your negligence; I must even use a harsher term, your idleness. A girl who has only to make an effort to be always at the head of her class, ought not to remain contentedly below others, naturally her inferiors. If you were not endowed with fine capacities, I should feel less regret, but I cannot bear to see such gifts neglected."

Harriet's deepening cheek attested the interest with which she listened; but there was something

soothing in the admission of her ability, which seemed a compensation for the reproof of her abuse of it; and, with a common perversion of feeling, that which ought to have been felt as increasing her condemnation, only lightened her compunction.

Looking up, while a smile began to dimple her mouth, "Dear Mrs. Thurston!" said she, "you do not think I could be always head, do you?"

"I do," replied her instructress, with increasing gravity; "but, in saying so, I convey a reproof, the severity of which you appear little to regard;—for, how often in the last two months, Harriet, have you been so?"

Harriet's half-formed smile was gone, and, with an embarrassed countenance she stood, by turns biting her nail, or twisting the strings of her work-bag.

"But listen to me," said her kind friend, anxious to make an impression on her: "although so short a time remains to you, I have confidence enough in your power, to believe that you can even yet obtain the prize in your class, if you will try. Do not mistake me; I would not teach you to value the prize merely as a distinction, but as the evidence to your parents and your friends of having done your duty. I hardly know," continued she, "if it be right, thus to urge you;—Louisa Warden

has been so industrious, that she ought to succeed, and you should be left to the consequences of your own indolence;—but yet, my affection for you is such, that I must give you one more chance."

Harriet, more affected by Mrs. Thurston's kindness, than by her reproof, declared, "she *would*, indeed she would, be more diligent for the future;" and Mrs. Thurston, tapping her cheek, dismissed her, saying as she went,—"You're a sad girl, but I can't help loving you."

In this sentiment, that lady was not singular; it was, indeed, the feeling of the whole school over which she presided, which was one of much respectability, in a small town in New England. Mrs. Thurston had known better, though, perhaps, not happier, days; for, eminently fitted to attach her pupils, she derived much enjoyment from them, in return. Several of her scholars resided with her; and of these, Harriet Langdon, a girl of about thirteen years of age, was one of the most pleasing.

'Hal,' as she was familiarly called by her companions, was, in fact, the Robin-good-fellow of the school; and no matter to what extent her mischief was carried, such was the charm of her happy laugh, her good-nature, her frank and generous character,

that, wherever *she* was, all were ready to declare,—

"A merrier hour was never wasted there."

Mrs. Thurston's rules were reasonable: and, though not rigorously enforced, they were by no means a dead letter. By a happy mixture of kindness and discipline, she found little difficulty in the successful government of her school. Harriet Langdon, however, though never rebellious, was too full of spirits not to be sometimes betrayed into the infringement of the salutary laws, by which the little community was regulated. Yet, no tongue ever wagged against her; and "*Nobody*," a person who has committed more mischief than all the "*good people*" of Scotland, or the "*Cluricauns*" of Ireland, generally bore the blame of *her* misdoings. Friday evening was the privileged time for the gambols of such of the girls as had been able to restrain themselves within the limits of a due sobriety during the week. The large school-room was then abandoned to them, and, wild as the sprites on "Hallow-e'en," they indulged their licensed mirth. It would sometimes happen, that Harriet's effervescence could not be repressed through six interminable days, as they appeared to

her; but her companions would as soon have thought of relinquishing the privilege itself, as of betraying one, who enabled them best to enjoy it. Contrary to the feeling usually created by such a belief, Harriet, though suspected of being Mrs. Thurston's favourite, lost nothing thereby of the good-will of her school-mates, who rather availed themselves of her supposed interest to obtain indulgences, or to effect their reconciliation, if out of favour; offices which she delighted to undertake, and would even screen them from blame by sacrifices on her own part. Some of the boarders were permitted by their parents an allowance of money for their pleasures. Harriet's, though more liberal than the rest, was, however, not always adequate; but Mrs. Thurston resolutely refused to anticipate the monthly supply. Though disappointed on other occasions, Harriet ventured one morning to repeat the request.

"I am surprised, Harriet," said Mrs. Thurston, "that you should again apply to me on this subject. You know me well enough to be convinced that I will not yield to importunity what I have withheld from principle."

"I know that well, dear Madam," said Harriet, "but indeed, indeed, I will not ask it again."

"The best way to prevent that, is not to grant it now."

After a moment of silence, Harriet continued, in a hesitating tone: "I would not ask it, if it were for myself."

"Ah! that will not do—generosity is no excuse for extravagance, or irregular expenditure."

"But this is a very different thing from what you think, Mrs. Thurston."

"Well, then," replied she, in a relenting voice, "tell me, and let me judge of its propriety."

Harriet again paused.

"I don't think I can tell you, Madam."

"Then I certainly shall not grant your request—indeed I have done wrong to hold any parley about it—go, now, to your studies."

Still Harriet loitered—then, as if summoning all her resolution, she said, "Mrs. Thurston, if you will grant me this favour, I assure you on my word, that when I tell you the object for which I want it, and this I hope to do, you will approve it. I have never deceived you, have I?"

Mrs. Thurston reflected that it was better to repose too much, than too little confidence.

"There, Harriet," said she, "is your money—I cannot reject the pledge you have offered."

But further disclosure was unnecessary, when she next day observed Mary Chadwick, one of the younger boarders, studying in a new grammar, which she knew she had no funds to purchase. It was a conclusion warranted by Harriet's character, that her allowance had gone to replace one lost, or spoiled; which, knowing the displeasure her carelessness would incur, the child had not dared to disclose.

Yet, though she had a generous pleasure in saving others from the consequences of their faults, she shrunk not from the punishment due to her own. Among the minor regulations of the school, but to which, nevertheless, Mrs. Thurston attached much importance, it was enacted, that none should leave their seats without permission, or speak to each other, unless absolutely necessary. The first, Harriet could respect without difficulty, but the second bore hard upon her. A few mornings after her conversation with Mrs. Thurston, while the school was profoundly still, a careless child, sitting on the edge of her chair, lost her balance, and down she came. No one presumed to notice the occurrence, except Harriet, who whispered, slily, to Margaret Ross, occupying the desk next to her own, "Maria Douglass has left her seat *without leave!*"

Margaret resisted the temptation to reply.

At this moment an ass brayed loudly before the window.

"Jack would make a figure at our examination, Margaret, wouldn't he? He speaks loud enough to please Mr. Hunter, himself, who never seems to care whether we answer right or wrong, if he can only hear."

"I should think, at the rate you study," replied her companion, unable to suppress the idea, "you'd rather have *Jack* for one of the *judges*."

A pleasant retort hung on the tip of Harriet's tongue, but was arrested by a reprimand from Mrs. Thurston, who had observed Margaret speaking, but had not detected Harriet.

"Miss Ross," said she, opening the fatal book containing the black list of defaulters, "I am sorry to place your name where it has seldom been;" and was extending her hand towards her pen, when Harriet rose;—

'Meg shall not get there this time,' thought she, 'if I can help it;' and, approaching Mrs. Thurston, she exclaimed, with earnestness, "Do not, dear Madam, punish Margaret—indeed it was my fault—she only did it to reprove me."

Margaret looked relieved, and cast a grateful glance at Harriet; and Mrs. Thurston, though se-

cretly pleased with Harriet's ingenuousness, immediately inscribed her name; not daring to pardon the fault in one too apt to abuse such clemency.

For some days after Mrs. Thurston's expostulation, Harriet applied herself faithfully to her books, but at the close of the week her ardour abated. Louisa Warden, on the contrary, between whom and herself the chief competition had been expected, lost nŏt a moment. Diligence supplied to her the want of that quickness on which Harriet too much relied. She was, indeed, the *pattern* girl in all things. Neat, methodical, and persevering,—her books, her clothes, and her lessons, were always what they should be; and, though she had not the popular qualities of 'Hal,' was so amiable and unoffending, that no one entertained an unfriendly feeling towards her.

The first class, consisting of twelve of the oldest girls in the school, had, for the last six months, been devoted to Ancient Geography and History, Chronology and Astronomy. As they were kindred studies, it had been decided that the prize should be adjudged to the one who, on the whole, excelled in all. This was to be a rich silver medal, having, on one side, a globe engraved, with other appropriate emblems; the other left blank, in order to receive the name of the girl who should obtain it.

Mrs. Thurston perceived that Harriet's efforts were relaxing, and when, about the middle of the third week preceding the final trial, she was still found very deficient in her lessons, Mrs. Thurston said to her, the rest of the class having returned to their seats,—

"You remember 'The Hare and the Tortoise,' I suppose, Harriet—believe me, 'tis no fable, as you may think; but a true history of the fate of the idle."

Harriet attempted not to reply, but, as she mused on Mrs. Thurston's words, uttered with more than usual severity, she felt, that like the giddy and presumptuous Hare, she had trusted too much to her speed at the last. That evening, instead of leaving her lessons until the morning, she withdrew herself from every one, and commenced what now seemed an effort to some purpose. The next morning, without waiting for the bell, with which the girls were summoned to rise, she was up an hour before the rest; though, heretofore, she could almost have found it in her heart, to have served the little *black* Aurora, who heralded the rising sun, as the lazy Sybarites are reported to have treated their cocks.

From this time till the examination, not even Louisa Warden exceeded her in laborious study.

The event so interesting to the school, was scarcely less so to the town itself. Many persons were related to, or otherwise interested in the children; and others, from respect to Mrs. Thurston, wished to give importance to her establishment. Some gentlemen of the first consideration in the place were to be the judges; for, by a rule that has obtained in some schools, though liable to much exception, the prize was to be awarded to the one who appeared best at the examination.

On the morning of the appointed day, the girls, dressed in white, their differently coloured ribands marking the three classes into which they were divided, were arranged in three rows, elevated one above the other, at one end of the room. At the opposite side, sat the gentlemen who constituted the tribunal; the sight of whose gold-headed canes, and imposing gravity, somewhat repressed the mercurial spirits over whose destinies they presided.

Mrs. Thurston occupied a middle station on one side, and the company assembled to witness the exhibition were seated on the other.

The two younger classes were first examined in the different branches to which their attention had been directed, and the judges, having pronounced their righteous decision, turned to the consideration of the first class, who now were to pass the ordeal.

They were placed according to size, not priority,—that the minds of the examiners might be unbiassed. Margaret Ross was at the head, and Harriet Langdon next.

"Now," said Mr. Hunter, "if the young ladies will only have the goodness to speak loud enough, that we may have the full benefit of their information—"

Harriet jogged Margaret—as much as to say, 'didn't I tell you so?'—and then the important business commenced.

For some time the merits of all seemed nearly equal; but as they advanced into the astronomical problems and calculations, Louisa and Harriet took the lead: the former, however, soon fell into the rear. Twice or thrice at fault, Louisa lost her self-possession; and, from mere alarm and confusion, had no longer any power over her own mind: while Harriet, from the tact and readiness with which she discovered, and by lucky hints, corrected her mistakes, naturally enough impressed her judges with the erroneous belief of her superior attainments. Once, indeed, in an interesting inquiry as to the moon's nodes, Harriet was in a dilemma from which no guess could extricate her. Her friend Margaret Ross, who, though she could not solve the question an instant before, when addressed to herself, recol-

lected the answer as soon as it had passed, softly prompted her; but, even in such a strait, Harriet would not avail herself of what she considered an unfair advantage, and the friendly whisper fell unheeded. Harriet's embarrassment imparted a momentary courage to poor Louisa; and, recalling her scattered thoughts, she gave the right solution, but in tones so faltering, that it never reached the tribunal, and the inquiry passed to another.

After a thorough and patient hearing, the gentlemen declared themselves highly gratified by the performance of the young ladies generally; but that for promptness, clearness of utterance, and intelligent and accurate replies, they must yield the palm to Miss Harriet Langdon: Mr. Hunter, the speaker on the occasion, adding, (for the old gentleman liked a dash of his antiquated classics,) 'That he hoped the prize would not prove an apple of discord among the fair competitors.'

Mrs. Thurston tried to preserve her usual equability; and, notwithstanding the pleasure the award secretly gave her, succeeded tolerably well. The girls generally looked satisfied;—even Louisa Warden showed no sense of injustice, though she could not conceal her disappointment; and Harriet was pleased, but not elated.

The distribution of the premiums next took

place; and having appropriately rewarded the best scholars in the younger classes, the beautiful silver medal was presented to Harriet. Mrs. Thurston, according to her custom, invited the judges, and several of those most interested in the children, to pass the evening at her house; and they separated to meet again at that time. This night was always considered the children's *fête*, and its amusements were of such a kind as they could participate in;—the adults consenting for a time to retrace their steps, and to lose, amid the games of youth, the cares and troubles of maturer age. A variety of sports had been permitted, in consideration of the younger part of the company; but they having had their turn, Mrs. Thurston proposed the French game of "*Le Secrétaire*," which, requiring the exercise of ingenuity and taste, was not unworthy of the guests who had honoured them with their presence. Mr. Hunter, the gravest gentleman of the party, volunteered to sustain the office of "The Secretary," and Mrs. Thurston consented to sit as a mark for the wit of the whole company; which, conveyed in a couplet or more, was to be inscribed on a slip of paper, and committed to the custody of the Secretary, by whom it was deposited in a green bag, his badge of office. After one from each person was received, he was to draw them forth at

random, and read them aloud. The first person who was detected as the author of one of these anonymous accusations, or compliments, as the case might be, was next to run the gauntlet.

Various were the effusions on this occasion, of which the purport of all was the highest possible praise of Mrs. Thurston. Much of the poetry was not, indeed, the smoothest in the world. Sometimes defrauded of two or three of its members, it limped so as to set all Mr. Hunter's rules of prosody at defiance; and at other times running away with more feet than a centipede, the poor old gentleman lost his breath in his efforts to keep up with it. But never did the brightest inspiration of genius produce more real enjoyment. One after another, visiters and entertainers succeeded to the post of distinction, which, according to universal experience, brings defects as well as graces into view; until Louisa Warden being detected, she, like the rest, was to take her chance.

Harriet's satisfaction at her success had not been unmingled with pain. Had Louisa betrayed any ill temper or littleness, she could have better borne to disappoint her; but her uncomplaining yet evident mortification grieved her, and excited many other uncomfortable feelings. The first flush of victory soon subsided, and the rest of the day she

had appeared with even less than her usual spirits. As Louisa's name was announced, and *Le Secrétaire* offered his bag for the reception of the billets, Harriet's eye brightened; and, after some hesitation, chewing the end of her pen, writing, erasing, and writing again, by the instinct of a musical ear, she made out all her couplets, and threw them among the rest.

The bag replenished, the Secretary replaced his spectacles, and proceeded to the discharge of his duty. Verse after verse was received with applause as sincere, if not as critical, as rewards the efforts of greater poets; and the Secretary pronounced that all were read.

"There is certainly *one* more," said Harriet, anxiously.

Again he looked, and on a scroll that had before eluded his search, were found these lines:

No joy to me the glittering prize;
heart Upon my ~~head~~ a weight it lies,
And says, "Whate'er the judge decree,
More just it is to *you* than *me*."
I yield the fatal gift again:
No *world I* crave, that's bought with pain.

A murmur of surprise ran round the room—the paper fell from the hands of the astonished secreta-

ry—Louisa, overcome, could not utter a word—while Harriet, looking far happier than when she received it, presented to her the morocco case containing the medal.

Mrs. Thurston was the first to speak:—

"Accept it, Louisa," said she to the reluctant girl: "Harriet is not more generous than just;—happy is it when these qualities, too often excluding each other, are found thus united! Patient diligence, and virtuous perseverance, ought not to lose a reward, pre-eminently designed to cherish them. Nor will Harriet, I trust, fail to derive a benefit from her experience this day. She has found that to enjoy success, it is indispensable to deserve it. But," added she, drawing her affectionately towards her, "though her name be not engraven on a tablet of silver, it shall find a record in our hearts."

THE SHAWL DANCE.

It was a clear cold morning in the month of December, that Sally Jennings had just finished her duties about the bed of her sick mother-in-law, who, in consequence of paralysis, had been for a long time nearly helpless. The snow-white pillow case, the clean sheet nicely folded over the coverlet, the cap carefully plaited, fresh night gown, and clean pocket handkerchief placed on the pillow beside her mother, showed a kind attention to her wants. This done, Sally had seated herself at her needle by her stinted fire, with one foot on a cradle, in which lay a sleeping child, when a gentle tap at the door announced a visiter; and a blooming girl of nearly thirteen years appeared.

"What! is it you, my dear child?" said the poor paralytic. "Why did you knock? You know we would as soon shut out the light of Heaven as you."

"I forgot myself, Aunt Becky," replied Ellen, laughing; "but now I am in, I shall soon make myself at home:" and, rejecting the seat which Sally offered her, she took one by the bed-side.

Jack Frost, who takes strange liberties, had kissed her pretty cheeks till they vied with the crimson of her hat and cloak; and her eyes peeped forth from her dark clustering curls, bright as the stars of a winter night.

"Is not your bed too near the window, Aunt Becky? I should think the wind would come through those cracks."

"I would rather run that risk," replied Mrs. Jennings, "than be removed from this cheerful corner: here I can admire the pretty frost-work on our elm tree, and here I can see to read when the rest of the room is nearly dark. Sally has made this stuff curtain since you were here; and when I want to sleep she drops it; for you know I cannot lie on my other side."

"I thought Mrs. Ludlow gave her that for a warm petticoat for herself," said Ellen.

"So she did, but neither she nor my son think any thing too much for me."

"They are indeed good children to you, Aunt Becky; and that's a comfort, I'm sure."

"Children!" said the old woman, with animation; "they are father and mother to me."

Sally, who had pursued her work in silence, now observed with a pleasant smile, "Mother thinks too much of the little we can do for her. If my husband had not been so unfortunate as to lame his hand, we should try to do more."

"And is it no better?" asked Ellen.

"No, Miss—it will be a great while before he can use his awl again, except for cobbling. Folks don't like to give him nice work to do yet."

There was a pause of some moments; when Ellen, opening her little reticule, drew a purse from it, in a slow and embarrassed manner.

"I am ashamed, Aunt Becky," said she, "to give you so little; but it is all I have. I believe, however, it will buy you a pound of tea."

"My dear child, you are always giving me something; just like your blessed mother, who would never let me want. I am sure her mantle rests upon you; for you are as like her in goodness, as you are in looks."

Ellen's countenance changed at the mention of her mother; but she soon replied, "She only did what was right, then, I'm sure, for all the care you took of her when she was a little girl. She always told

me that children owed as much to a faithful nurse, as they did to a mother."

"Heaven knows she paid me all she owed, and much more; and hadn't John got himself such a good wife before she was taken away, I know not what would have become of me."

Ellen now approached the window that looked into their little yard. Their small wood-pile arrested her attention; and she sighed as she thought what a long, long winter was yet to come.

"Aunt Becky," said she, "your room wants plastering: it must be very cold, I'm sure."

"Yes, dear, that it is; but it would take a handful of money to repair it."

"Would not a stove be better for you?"

"Much better, and Sally is trying to earn enough to hire one; for buying it is out of the question for us. She works late and early; and, perhaps, the next time you come we shall have it."

Sally said nothing: she knew her little store grew slowly; but she would not disturb her mother with her own anxious thoughts.

As Ellen tied her cloak, and was preparing to take her leave, a movement in the cradle announced that the baby boy was waking. Rubbing his eyes, and then throwing his fat arms over the covering,

he smilingly uttered his salutation and his requests, unintelligible to all but his mother.

"Good morning, Mr. Henry!" said she—"yes, yes, I'll take you up;—you have been a good boy to sleep so long, and let me do all my morning work. Come, Sir, hold out your hands!—there, that's a man!—there, you are in mother's lap!—and see! there's Miss Ellen come to see him."

The little fellow, hardly yet ready to receive company, rejected her proffered hand, and impatiently nestled in his mother's bosom, while Ellen good-naturedly reseated herself till he had taken his breakfast. When that was despatched, which we have known quite as important to older gentlemen, he turned playfully round, his ruby pouting lips showing how industriously he had laboured to satisfy the cravings of nature. He was now ripe for sport, and after amusing him till the time allotted to her visit was expended, Ellen was obliged to run away, in spite of a loud complaining cry from her playfellow.

Ellen pursued her way thoughtfully. Though young, she was not unreflecting; and though herself a favoured child of affluence, she was not unmindful of the wants of others. These dispositions she owed to her excellent mother, whose example and instruction had confirmed the originally amiable

temper of her child. Mr. Campbell, the father of Ellen, had with success devoted himself to the acquisition of fortune; and in the exclusive pursuit of that object, had little sympathy with the benevolence of his wife; which, with all her apparent wealth, she frequently indulged by the sacrifice of her personal pleasures and elegancies. Ellen, her only child, was her companion and confidant; and thus early learned to admire and practise that self-denial which is the foundation of virtue. Mr. Campbell was not, however, unwilling to spend his money. He even called himself liberal. Like others, who, springing from obscurity, are determined to *buy* honour, his house, his servants, his daughter, his whole establishment exhibited proofs of his free expenditure. His name, too, illustrated many a subscription; and though tradesmen called him "a sharp man," they owned that he punctually paid their bills.

As Ellen entered her father's house, the contrast between it and the dwelling she had just left struck her painfully; and she longed in some way to increase the comforts of her good old friend.

At dinner, her father inquired where she had been that morning.

"To Aunt Becky Jennings," replied she.

"To Mrs. Jennings!—she does not live in the direction I saw you taking."

"She has moved, papa, since you saw her."

"And how does the old woman do?"

Encouraged to proceed, Ellen replied with much earnestness, "Very poorly, indeed! And then, too, she has scarcely any wood; and her room is so out of repair, that the wind comes in dreadfully."

"Why don't her son put it in order?"

"You forget, papa, he injured his hand so that he can scarcely do any thing."

"Is not that well yet? Some people are for ever getting into trouble. I am afraid they're but a helpless family. Why cannot they get on as well as others?"

"You know, papa, Aunt Becky has been sick a great while; and that must be very expensive. Yet there never was any one so patient as she is. Mamma, when she used to read to her, often said it did her more good to go there than any where else."

"Well, well, I dare say they're good sort of people,—but inefficient."

Ellen did not know how to go on, yet her heart urged her sadly. At length—"They've not more than wood enough," said she, "for three or four days."

Mr. Campbell continued to eat with an appeti

that did credit to his well-dressed dinner, and Ellen was compelled to make another attempt.

"How much do you think, papa, it would cost to plaster the room? 'tis quite a small one."

"I don't know; perhaps five or six dollars."

"Sally Jennings said they could hire a stove for three dollars," said Ellen, with an oblique glance at her father; but no notice was taken of it. Under the benign influences, however, of a good and sufficient meal, with a glass or two of old wine, Mr. Campbell at length said, "Ellen, I shall direct Saunders to buy a load of wood for Mrs. Jennings to-morrow—that, I presume, is as much as you feel obliged to do for her."

"*Obliged!* papa—I don't know what you mean by that. I do not wish to do it because I am obliged. It is a pleasure to me to make her comfortable; for"——

"She wo'n't suffer, I'll be bound," interrupted Mr. Campbell.

"She may not *suffer*, indeed, papa—but that—that is not all, you know. *We* have a great deal more than just not to *suffer*"——But her father was gone, and further petition was precluded.

A few days after, as Ellen entered the parlour, her father put aside a newspaper he was reading, and said, "Monsieur Duval is, I understand, to

have a grand ball in six weeks—are you to have a part in any of the dances?"

"No, papa."

"Why not? Have you not been asked?"

"Oh! yes; Monsieur Duval wished me to take the shawl dance; but I told him I would rather not."

"And why so, pray?"

"No very *great* reason," said Ellen, smiling—"only I don't like to be so conspicuous."

"Nonsense! what do you learn to dance for, but to be seen? Who are to dance on this occasion?"

"A great many—among others, Eliza Stanley."

Now, it so happened that there had been for some time a secret competition for display between Mr. Campbell and Mr. Stanley; and the same spirit which had regulated their coaches, their furniture, and their entertainments, was now to find a subject in Ellen: the name of Stanley, therefore, decided the matter.

"I cannot consent to such folly, Ellen," said her father—"you must show what you can do, too."

Ellen begged and entreated to no purpose;—her father not only expected her to dance, but to dance the best. Considering coercion, however, rather a doubtful agent, in an affair that eminently required, to ensure success, the co-operation of the

inclination, he concluded by saying, "I'll hear no more about it, Ellen, but must be obeyed. To show you, however, that I can reward as well as command, you shall have ten dollars, to do with them what you choose, provided you succeed at the ball to my wish."

Ellen reflected a few moments—and then said, "Papa, I'll do what I can to please you."

At her next lesson, M. Duval was informed that she would take the part he had at first assigned to her, and, as she was a favourite pupil, this was in his estimation a matter of as much importance, as it had appeared to her father.

Ellen now began patiently and carefully to accomplish herself for the great event, and as she became more and more mistress of the dance, it cannot be concealed that, in spite of the unaffected modesty of her character, she had a real pleasure in her success, and anticipated with much animation the night of the "grand ball."

At length it came, and never were hands so busy or hearts so full, as in the decorations of that hour! Half the little heads in town would have turned round off their own shoulders, but for certain kind protecting ligaments, which Nature had perhaps provided on purpose to guard against such emergencies. Oh! the cry for gauze, silk, flowers, kid

gloves, and white shoes! Oh! the confusion of nurseries, the pride of fathers, the anxiety of mothers! At seven o'clock a large and fashionable company assembled in a spacious and lofty room, through which three brilliant chandeliers diffused the most beautiful light. The orchestra was filled with an excellent band, the elastic floor would scarcely permit any one to remain still, and all things conspired to produce the best effect.

And now the ball is about to open, and from an adjoining room issue eight lovely girls in pairs, of equal height, between the ages of six and fourteen. These, dressed precisely alike, in white, with wreaths of flowers in their hands, perform the ballet with wonderful grace and dexterity. Then follow the sprightly gavots;—then Eliza Stanley executes beautifully a chantreuse;—this is succeeded by hornpipes and a pas seul; and Ellen with a beating heart sees that her turn is soon to come. Mr. Campbell, always proud of his daughter, was never more so than at this moment. Her robe as thin as gossamer, fell over a dress of white silk, to which a shawl of mingled and brilliant colours hanging on her arm, afforded a fine relief. Her hair in curls flowed over her shoulders, and her complexion, colourless from apprehension, her de-

licate figure, smaller than is usual at her age, and her light, and scarcely audible step, as she moved to take her station on the floor, gave to her an ethereal appearance.

And see! with slender foot advanced, she stands,
While falls the scarf within her trembling hands.
List! list! they come—the low and lengthen'd notes,
And like the down upon the air she floats.
Now waves the shawl, with slow alternate sway,
From side to side; and whispers seem to say
That new-born zephyrs breathe in every fold!
That fairy fingers do the tassels hold!
But changing cheek, and anxious eye—they tell
The mortal fears that in her bosom dwell.
She onward moves, though with such noiseless tread
She seems a vision o'er the senses shed.
Each voice is hush'd, as held in witching charm,
Or fear'd lest it the flitting sprite alarm.
Now see! she turns, and casts above her head
The many tinted shawl. Its hues are spread
In arch of beauty, and the sylph below
Seems a young Iris with her varying bow.
And then with magic touch so quick, so slight,
As almost mocks the eye, the wond'ring sight
Sees it in graceful folds a turban made!
To bind those brows, that fair young forehead shade.
Yet still, so true her step and time, you'd say
'Twas mechanism all! and springs obey
The music's touch. Ah! ne'er were springs so true,
As move that airy form within your view!

But hark! a quicken'd measure
Bids pulses faster beat;
Her eye lights up with pleasure,
And swiftly speed her feet.
Now, while she 's gaily winding,
No terror she betrays,
But her turban quick unbinding,
The changeful tune obeys.
Then her waist of finest moulding
The shawl she twines around;
Next on her bosom folding,
A Grecian cross 'tis found!
While o'er her shoulders flowing,
The tassels she has thrown,
And her lovely cheek is showing
Like a rose that 's newly blown.
But soft—once more the slow prolonging strain,
Calls Ellen back to graver steps again.
The shawl's recovered—and within her hand
Once more 'tis gently wav'd, a silken wand!
And now 'tis rais'd on high, and now descends,
Then with a farewell curt'sy low she bends.

As the dance concluded, Mr Campbell involuntarily advanced from the circle that had closed round Ellen, and taking her hand led her to a seat, while a murmur of applause fell on his delighted ear. There was something in the music, in the skilful adaptation of the movement, the unbroken attention that had been excited, that touched him;

and his emotion was evident as he whispered, "You have done charmingly, my darling! and I am greatly obliged to you."

Ellen replied by a smile; and, being relieved foom her own particular duty, the rest of the evening was delightful to her.

The next morning at the breakfast table, Mr. Campbell, as good as his word, handed his daughter a ten dollar bank note.

"There, my dear," said he, "and I wish I could pay every debt as willingly as I pay that. I am not, I remember, to prescribe what you shall do with it; but I will just give you a hint, that in this morning's paper, Barton advertises that he opens to-day some beautiful French goods."

Ellen only replied to thank her father, and soon escaped to spend it more to her mind.

Hastening to Mrs. Jennings, she requested her daughter to obtain a mason, and the necessary materials for the repairs of the room; and also furnished her with money for the hire of the stove. Every day she went to see the progress of the work, with as much interest as Michael Angelo contemplated St. Peter's; and at the end of a week, she asked her father one afternoon to walk with her. He consented; and, holding his arm, she led him quickly on, without his even inquiring in what di-

rection they were going, until they turned into a retired street.

"Where are you leading me, Ellen?" at length he asked.

"Not much farther," replied she, smilingly; and, on her opening the door of a small mean-looking house, Mr. Campbell found himself at Mrs. Jennings'. Instead of the miserable appearance he might have expected to find, the room was in good repair, clean as possible, a nicely polished stove was roaring away with a good fire, and little Henry, seated on the floor, was merrily shaking a straw rattle which Ellen had given him. His mother was sewing beside him, and Mrs. Jennings reading her Bible as she lay in her bed.

"So, my good friend," said Mr. Campbell, approaching her, "how do you do? I have not seen you for a long time."

"Oh, Sir, I do much better than I deserve. I cannot praise God enough for my mercies. My chief trouble is, that I do not more glorify by my patience Him who suffered so much more for me."

"And are you reading by this light? you surely cannot see."

"No, Sir, I don't see every word; but then my memory supplies those that I lose—and after all, Sir,

the best light is that which shines from within, you know."

"That's true—very true. Well, you really look quite comfortable here."

"Yes, Sir, so we do; and whom are we to thank but you, under God, who put it into your heart?"

Mr Campbell looked surprised, and perplexed, and Mrs. Jennings continued:

"Instead of the wind, and the snow, and the rain, coming in at twenty places, we have now a good tight room, and our stove makes it warm all over. It is some pleasure now to Sally to keep things clean and tidy, and she needn't watch the baby every minute lest he should fall into the fire."

Mr. Campbell was confounded, and would have betrayed himself, but for a look from Ellen which enjoined silence—as some relief he turned to the child.

"That's a fine little fellow!" said he: "he seems to know you, Ellen."

"Well he may," said his mother: "Miss Ellen does enough to please him. She held him and played to him yesterday as much as an hour, while I moved mother back out of the shop after the masons were done."

"He isn't then afraid of strangers—here, my

boy!" cried he, snapping his fingers; but the child in terror clung to Ellen's frock.

"Strangers!" repeated Mrs. Jennings; "Ellen is the best of friends, Sir. It almost makes my old dead limbs leap for joy when she comes to see us."

Mr. Campbell was affected by the praises of his daughter. They had touched a chord that always vibrated; and going up to Sally, he put some money in her hand.

"Take it for your boy," said he, "and may he prove as good a child as mine;"—and, impatient for an explanation with Ellen, he soon terminated their visit.

"Ellen," said he, as they left the house, "I am not usually very skilful in penetrating the nice mysteries of you females, but I think for once I have succeeded. From what I have just seen and heard, I understand that instead of appropriating the money I gave you, to your own personal gratification, you have expended it in relieving the distressed; and that your generosity has even gone so far as to bestow the credit of this on me—is it not so?"

"Papa, I did not say so—that would not have been true;—but it *was your* money—was it not? and if they naturally concluded that I was acting by your direction, why should I undeceive them?"

"You are a dear good child!" said her father, much softened by her delicate regard to his reputation, "and discreet as benevolent. I hope I shall be the better for this, Ellen; and from this time, believe me, I shall not fear to make you my almoner."

THE SKATING MATCH.

Rose Cunningham was the daughter of a widowed lady in the city of New York. Her father, with the improvidence too common in our country, had lived in a style beyond what his income justified; and left his wife, an interesting delicate woman, and one child, the subject of our little tale, to struggle with the anxieties and privations of poverty. In the moment of Mrs. Cunningham's greatest distress, Mr. Warren, whose wife had been one of her youthful friends, with whom she had kept up an intercourse during her married life, kindly invited her to the shelter of his house. They had, however, a large family; and Mrs. Cunningham perceived that the addition of another child must be a serious inconvenience. With the intention therefore of imposing on them less trouble, and at the same time forwarding the education of Rose, she concluded to place her at a boarding-school. This

description of school was not then of the same expensive or liberal character as at present; and the terms of tuition were within the limited means of Mrs. Cunningham.

The morning on which Rose and her mother were to be for the first time separated, was bright to all eyes but theirs. Variety, that enchantress, which sheds a charm over every change to the mind of a child; which can even recommend a remove, a fire, or that bane of all domestic comfort, a *general cleaning*, could not conjure up any illusion to console Rose. When she awoke, her eyes were yet red with the weeping with which she had at last sunk to sleep in her mother's arms; and as she asked her assistance in fastening her frock, they were again filled at the thought, that the next day a stranger must perform that office. When she knelt beside her mother at their accustomed morning devotions, and her arm was tenderly extended over her child, while she earnestly recommended her to the God of the fatherless, Rose sobbed aloud; and Mrs. Cunningham, unable to proceed, could only fold her to her bosom, and with eyes upraised, express more eloquently than by words, the supplications of her love. Their sad and silent breakfast was rather a form than a refreshment; and at length with a fainting heart Rose heard the street

door close on them, and found herself actually on the way to Mrs. Dunlap's. On reaching the house, a dirty girl with uncombed hair, and clothes in disorder, showed them into a little parlour. Rose cast her eyes timidly round. She was not disappointed at the absence of handsome furniture, or the luxuries to which her eyes had heretofore been accustomed. She knew that at such a place they were not to be expected, and that *she* henceforth must do without them. But to the well-ordered arrangement, and beautiful neatness of her mother's house, Mrs. Dunlap's presented an unpleasant contrast. An open piano covered with dust, and strewed with torn music books, a soiled and much worn carpet, a dirty hearth, and creaking chairs, attesting the hard usage they had received, were too obvious not to attract attention; and Mrs. Cunningham herself was already regretting the engagement which she had formed, when Mrs. Dunlap entered, whose appearance was not calculated to efface their disagreeable impressions.

"I hope, Madam," said she, "you'll have the goodness to excuse this room; 'tis impossible to make the girls put aside their things at night, and 'tis so early that the servant hasn't had time yet to clear it. So, this is Miss Rose. How do you do, my dear? You like to come to school, don't you?

or is it hard parting with Mamma? Well, well, that will soon be over—you'll find play-mates enough here, and that's a cure-all."

Poor Rose's heart was full; and silence was her only resource against a shower of tears.

Mrs. Cunningham staid until the last moment that she could with propriety, and then compelled to go, constrained herself to be cheerful; and charging Rose to be a good girl, left her with a promise to return the next day.

Mrs. Dunlap now directed her to accompany her up stairs, where she was introduced to the dormitory. Here a little bed was pointed out as hers, a nail, also, where she was to hang her hat, and a place in which to dispose of her clothes. These little cares for a while afforded some relief to her feelings, and prepared her to be ushered into the school-room.

Rose was a little past eleven years of age. Her mourning dress added to the interest, which her sad look and delicate complexion inspired.

There is something peculiarly touching in the first, deep, heart-felt sorrow of childhood, and the curiosity with which a new comer is greeted on entering a school, was softened in this instance, by the feeling of compassion which her appearance created. Even the assistant, Miss Andrews, in

spite of the acrimony engendered by the state of continual hostility in which her life was passed, with a number of provoking girls, regarded the little gentle being with an aspect of kindness, instead of viewing her as a new torment.

Unused to the routine of a school, Rose was bewildered and frightened, and it was some time before she could apply her mind to her lessons; but Miss Andrews considerately excused her mistakes, on the ground of her being, as she said, "strange yet," and only recommended to her to study harder in the afternoon. At twelve o'clock, the signal of release, the children clustered round Rose, and introduced themselves to her acquaintance, in the usual manner on similar occasions.

"Have you ever been to school before?" asked one.

"No," answered Rose in a low gentle voice.

"How old are you?" inquired another.

Rose civilly answered the question.

"How many brothers and sisters have you?" asked a third.

"I haven't any."

"Are you a day-scholar or a boarder?" said a fourth.

"A boarder."

"How long are you going to stay?"

"I don't know."

From these interrogatories they proceeded to a more familiar investigation.

"Does your hair curl naturally?" asked one, taking up a handful of Rose's beautiful curls. Rose gently moved her head to release herself from the unceremonious inquirer, and replied that it did.

Another would have taken from her neck a slender gold chain, to examine it; but Rose instinctively placed her hand on it, to protect from common touch, a locket of hair which, suspended from it, hung within her frock. Thus far she had sustained their inquisition with tolerable tranquillity; but one little girl, with a feeling of mingled curiosity and sympathy, asked her "who she was in mourning for?" Entirely overcome by this unexpected intrusion on her sorrows, her eyes filled, and choked with emotion she turned round and reclined her head on a desk behind her. The other girls reproved the child; and Rose, left a while to herself, recovered her composure.

In a few days she became rather more reconciled to her situation. Frequent visits from her mother, with her judicious counsel, consoled and strengthened her, and she gradually acquired confidence among the strangers to whom she had been introduced. Yet she still found it a life of trial.

The rude sports of the girls were disagreeable to her; the harsh and imperative manner of Mrs. Dunlap, so unlike the sweet and engaging ways of her mother, depressed her; and Miss Andrews, incapable of discrimination, often poured on her unoffending head, the irritation which the faults of others had excited. Still she was patient and uncomplaining. She understood the troubles of her mother, and with a sort of instinct forebore to increase them by a single murmur. Her occasional visits to Mrs. Warren's formed her only pleasure, and these occurred at long intervals; for with a delicacy becoming her obligations to her friends, Mrs. Cunningham allowed herself but rarely this gratification; and without an express permission Rose seldom ventured to go. One Saturday afternoon, however, when some of the other boarders were going home to pass Sunday, she thought she would hazard a visit to her mother. Having obtained leave she proceeded to Mrs. Warren's, and went softly up to her mother's room in the third story. The door was locked without, and though she thought it probable that her mother was not at home, she could not bear to go away, and seated herself patiently on the stairs by the door, to await her return.

She had not sat there long, when through the well of the stairs, came up the glad voices of Mrs. Warren's children, who, in the hall below, were holding their Saturday revels. They were pleasant little creatures, and had always shown the kindest dispositions towards Rose. She longed to join them, she knew she should be welcome;—still she did not. The day declined, and night came, but not her mother. The children had retreated into the parlour, but still their merriment reached her as the door opened and re-opened with the preparations for tea. Her slender fare at Mrs. Dunlap's would have rendered Mrs. Warren's generous table right welcome, yet still she kept her post. At last, wearied with watching and disappointment, she leaned her head against the banisters, and fell asleep. From this she was roused by a gentle tap on her shoulder, and opening her eyes, she saw Mrs. Warren who having occasion to come up stairs, had found her there.

"My dear child," asked she, "why are you sitting here?"

"Mother's door was locked," said Rose, averting her face from the glare of the candle.

"Well, what if it were, couldn't you come into the parlour?"

"No, Ma'am,—mother says I must always go into her room, if I come when she is out."

"But," said Mrs. Warren, laughing, "her door being locked, you could not get in, you know; then surely you might have come down."

"That makes no difference, Ma'am," replied Rose, too honest to evade the spirit of the injunction; "I know what mother *meant*."

"And you have had no supper, either!"

"I did not miss that, when I was asleep," said Rose, smiling.

"No, but I fancy you miss it now you are awake—come down with me directly, you patient little soul! and you shall have the best I can get for you."

Rose now felt herself at liberty to do so, and accompanied Mrs. Warren to the parlour.

"Here," said she to her children, "is Rose Cunningham—and where do you think I found her? I wish you, you wild things! would be as obedient to *me*, as she is to *her* mother."

Mrs. Warren then related the circumstance, and the children, by their friendly smiles, generously accorded with the praises bestowed by their mother.

In a little while Mrs. Cunningham returned, and Mrs. Warren failing not to remonstrate against her over scrupulous delicacy, Rose's liberty was thus

somewhat enlarged. This little occurrence was but one instance, out of many, of her entire devotion to her mother's wishes; who, if all things else were taken from her, had still the inexhaustible treasure of her affectionate dutiful heart.

Rose had been some months at the school, when the scarlet fever made its appearance among the children. On hearing it, Mrs. Cunningham hastened to Mrs. Dunlap's, and found that Rose had already exhibited the symptoms. There seemed few comforts there for one sick child, still less for several, as were to be apprehended; yet Mrs. Cunningham had no choice, as to the disposal of Rose. To remove her to her friend's, and thus expose her family, was out of the question; and all she could do, was to remain herself at Mrs. Dunlap's, while her child was sick. Glad to be relieved of the care and responsibility, Mrs. Dunlap acquiesced in this arrangement; and Mrs. Cunningham, with an aching heart, day and night watched the progress of the disease, which proved to be of a malignant character.

Such of the boarders as were considered free from the infection, and could readily return home, left the school; and others, also, who were decidedly subjects of it; among these last was Eliza Middleton, a child of the age of Rose.

As Mrs. Cunningham was seated beside the bed in which Rose lay in a high fever, a coach drove to the door; and Mrs. Middleton, accompanied by a nurse, entered to remove Eliza. They cast a shuddering glance around the room, which had the appearance of a hospital, and anxiously hurried away the little favourite of fortune. Mrs. Cunningham, with bitter thoughts which she strove in vain to suppress, observed them. She had no home to which she could take *her* child, who had nevertheless been reared as tenderly, and loved as fervently! She turned her eyes to Rose; the unnatural appearance of her face terrified her; and bending over, tears fell on her burning cheeks. Rose was conscious of her mother's anxiety, and with her characteristic patience said, "Don't be distressed, mother, I shall soon be well; and, if not, I can bear it as well as others." This indeed she could, and much better; for with the too common intractability of sick children, they aggravated the real evils of the disease;—one declared she should strangle if she gargled her throat, a second cried for improper food, and a third could not take her medicine unless a particular person held her nose. Sometimes when Rose was just falling asleep a pitiful cry would wake her, or the light would be thoughtlessly flashed in her weak and inflamed

eyes—yet without expressing the slightest peevishness, she would simply say, "help me to turn on the other side, mother, and then I shall not be so much disturbed!" In the same manner she submitted to every thing prescribed; and, though at one time the sickest child of the whole number, her quiet temper seemed even to allay the violence of the disease.

One morning, as Mrs. Cunningham was tenderly holding Rose's little hand, and observing the gradual restoration of her natural complexion, the physician entered.

He paid his visits first to the other children, and then approaching Rose, "Ah!" cried he, "my little philosopher, you are coming on finely! I believe I shall dismiss you from the hospital the first; though," added he, addressing her mother, "to tell the truth, I was more alarmed for her than any of my patients. She was far worse than Mrs. Middleton's daughter."

"And how is she now, Doctor?" asked Mrs. Cunningham.

He lowered his voice, lest the children should hear him.

"She died about two hours since," said he.

The words went to Mrs. Cunningham's heart. 'Distrustful creature that I was,' thought she, 'to

repine that I could not provide for *my* child, those accommodations, on which I relied more than on a merciful God!'

In another week, Rose was well enough to be admitted to the school-room; and her mother returned to Mrs. Warren's.

A circumstance occurred soon after this, that had an important influence on Rose's future life.

Mrs. Cunningham's only sister resided about one hundred and fifty miles in the interior of the country. Owing to an unfortunate difference between their husbands, the sisters, though both were affectionate and amiable, had been for some time apparently estranged. At the time of her husband's death, Mrs. Cunningham, from motives easily understood, forebore to make her situation known, and Mr. Finlay, her brother-in-law, did not encourage any application. Mrs. Warren had, however, interested herself to effect a reconciliation; and at length a letter arrived from Mrs. Finlay, requesting that Rose might be allowed to pass the winter with her friends, in the village of C——. Happy to avail herself of any friendly inclinations on the part of her relations, Mrs. Cunningham consented; and Rose was accordingly fitted out for her journey. Though grieved to be so far removed from her mother, her little heart warmed at the

idea of kindred; and after the pang of parting was over, her mind filled with pleasing anticipations, she proceeded cheerfully, under the protection of a friend of Mrs. Warren.

When she arrived she was introduced into a large and respectable looking house, finely situated; and though it was late in the fall, every thing looked pleasant to one, who had been pent within the narrow streets of a city, and fettered by the restraints of a school. But poor Rose soon found that her trials were not yet over!

Her aunt indeed received her with kindness. But though she was a good hearted woman, she was too indolent in her temper, to make great efforts for any one; and the friendly feelings of Mr. Finlay, who, from a wish to gratify his wife, had invited the little orphan, were chilled. when on taking off her hood, nearly the counterpart of her father's face met his sight.

'Yes, yes,' thought he, 'there's the same countenance with which her father deceived me—his eye too—the same soft sleek look—well, well, the winter can't last for ever.'

These feelings naturally affected his manner: and Rose felt as if she could not breathe freely in his presence. She timidly turned from him to her aunt.

'She looks like mother,' she thought; 'and yet she does not either—there, now, she smiles—but it is not mother's smile,—so tender! and so sorrowful too, that it almost makes me cry sometimes,—she looks happier than mother, but not so sweet.' With the feelings natural to her age, she hoped to find sympathy in Julia, the eldest child, a few months older than herself, nor was her expectation entirely disappointed. She exhibited the strong traits of her father's character;—capable of much good and much ill; prejudiced and wilful; yet, when voluntarily subdued, generous to an extreme. She had heard enough of family matters to imbibe some of her father's feelings; and though her pride was gratified in having her cousin, as it were under her protection, she was resolved, like too many others who triumph in the exercise of power, to make her pay for it.

Though Rose was sensible of the tyranny in which Julia frequently indulged, she made no complaints,—not only because they were useless, or that with all her gentleness there was not a spirit within her that revolted against them, but that, in spite of Julia's perverseness, she still found an attraction in her decided and spirited character. When she was arrogant and overbearing, Rose would sigh for deliverance from what then appeared to her a sort

of captivity; but when Julia, melted by the unmurmuring sweetness of her cousin, or wearied with the exertion of her own power, would treat her with affection, Rose would secretly exclaim, 'Oh, if she were always thus!'

Mrs. Finlay could not but perceive these defects in her daughter, and sometimes in her ineffectual way reproved them; a proceeding which usually obtained Rose a double portion of caprice for a week after.

Mr. Finlay himself, at length began to soften towards her; or rather, to observe a contrast so unfavourable to his own child, as led him to scan with more attention their conduct.

"Julia, though a fine girl," said he, "can't *always* be right—and unless this little Cunningham be as artful as I at first imagined, I fear she is imposed on. This must be corrected—I will not allow of any injustice."

The winter was now nearly half spent. A succession of cold weather had produced ice enough to realize all the anticipations of the young villagers, and a skating-match was proposed as one of their holiday pleasures. To give to it the charm of novelty, it was to be held by moonlight, on a fine meadow in the rear of Mr. Finlay's house, through which ran a small *inundating* stream. In conse-

quence of heavy rains, it had recently overflowed its banks to a large extent, and the retreating waters having been arrested by the severe cold, the meadow now presented an unbroken and brilliant surface of ice, perfectly well adapted to the purpose. In the centre was a little mound, so much elevated above the meadow, as to escape the inundation. This was to be occupied by the spectators and judges of the game. A goal was erected at no great distance from it, and six times round this island, (as it appeared,) constituted the race. In the centre of the mound was reared a pole, to sustain a beautiful fur cap—the prize of the victor; and two gentlemen, amateur performers on the clarionet, were to take their station near it—the more to honour his triumph. All the boys in the village were *agog* with their anticipated sport, and the girls were no less interested for the success of their respective favourites. In two days the match was to take place, and every thermometer in the town was hourly consulted, to ascertain if an unlucky thaw, or a mal-a-propos fall of snow were to be apprehended.

Julia of course participated in the general excitement, and when on the morning preceding the appointed evening, she rose with a sore throat and some fever, her chagrin could scarcely be expressed.

Charging Rose, however, not to tell, she rubbed her neck with liniment, wrapped it in flannel, and pinning on a vandyke so as to conceal it, descended to the breakfast table. Although her eyes were heavy, her parents did not detect her cold; and to escape further observation she soon retreated to her room. During the morning her anxious inspection of her throat, and her frequent applications of the hartshorn, betrayed the increase of the complaint, and when dinner time arrived she requested Rose to go without her, and to say that she was not hungry; "but mind," added she, authoritatively, "mind you don't tell that I'm not well."

Rose made no answer—she was greatly at a loss what to do. If she told, she knew it would bring on her a burst of indignation from Julia, and perhaps several days of averted looks and cold answers, or no answers at all. If she did not tell, and her cousin should go and be made seriously ill by the exposure, her uncle and aunt would blame her severely—"and, what is worse," said she, "I should blame myself."

She seated herself at table, resolved therefore to do what her conscience told her was right.

"Where's Julia?" asked Mr. Finlay.

"She desired me to say that she did not wish any dinner," replied Rose, hoping that by further

inquiry she would be compelled to disclose the fact;—'for Julia cannot suppose,' thought she, 'that I would tell a falsehood for her!' But unfortunately Julia was subject to such whims, and it excited no surprise or remark.

'Then I must tell,' thought Rose; and, waiting till her uncle had left the room, she communicated the real state of the case to her aunt. This was an occasion on which Mrs. Finlay could be peremptory, and Julia knowing that her commands would be enforced by her father, heard with dismay that she must not think of going out that evening. The displeasure, however, that she dared not express to her mother, she vented on poor Rose.

"You've treated me very ill," said she, as soon as Mrs. Finlay left the room, while her eyes kindled with resentment.

"Don't say so, Julia," answered Rose, mildly; "I have only done what I thought I ought. Suppose you had gone, and fallen sick—what could I have said to aunt? and how sorry I should have been myself!"

"I wish you would not concern yourself so much about my health, Miss," replied Julia; "I am as able to judge of what will make me sick as you are."

"No, not now, because you wish so much to go, that you deceive yourself."

"*Deceive!*" repeated Julia, with increasing asperity; "it is well for *you*, indeed, to talk of *deceiving* after treating me so! I wonder you are not ashamed to speak the word:—but I might have known you would tell—I was a fool to trust you;—it is just like all your artful ways."

Rose could bear with caprice or unkindness, but such downright perversion of her motives angered even her gentle spirit; and, afraid to allow herself to speak, she left the room. During the rest of the day she avoided Julia, and when the hour for the race arrived, she attended her aunt to the ground; her uncle remained at home.

Julia, left to herself, had passed the weary hours in contrasting her forlorn situation, with the cheerful anticipations of every other child in the village. At half past six, when the young people began to assemble on the meadow, she placed herself by a south window that overlooked it. The sparkling waters of the pretty river, which through the willows that fringed its margin, would peep at intervals like a coy maiden, and laugh in the summer sun, were now imprisoned. The locusts and lindens which grew on the bank on which the house

stood, and which reared their heads as if to see themselves in the clear surface of the stream, now stripped of their beautiful covering, sighed to the winter winds. The birds, those little mercenaries, who had carolled amid their branches, had now gone to sing where they could be paid for their music, and the naked earth gave no signs of the life which reposed within her bosom. But though the summer glories were passed away, there were still joy and beauty in that little vale! A lovely moon seemed to have arrested her course directly over it, as if to inquire into the merry voices which had ascended even to her car;—and her sweet face was reflected in the icy mirror now spread over the meadow. The race had not yet begun, but the boys in tight roundabouts, to present the smallest surface to the air, and close leather caps, were, some of them, in light skirmishes giving note of the approaching combat;—others were gallantly drawing the girls on their sleds;—and here and there an expert skater extended his handkerchief, to which one or two girls clung, and like satellites attended their primary round the course. Nor were there wanting some unlucky boys, who, unable to keep their own feet, willingly contributed to trip up those of their neighbours, or at least rejoiced in their overthrow. Shouts frequently announced

that some were prostrate; it mattered not if boys or girls, none could restrain their laughter, or respect the feelings of their discomfited companions—Charles Blanchard excepted. Poor Rose, in trusting too much to the support of his handkerchief, had fallen like others; when, instead of a careless hurra, he checked as soon as possible his full career, and returned to assist her.

"It was my fault, Rose," said he; "I did not tie the knot well. There, now I've done it better;—now let's try again"—and away they went, like meteors. As she stopped, casting her eye up at Julia's window, Rose saw that the light was intercepted by a person who seemed to be contemplating the party below. Relenting at the thought of her solitude, "I ought," said she, "to forgive her;—she was sick and disappointed,—that is enough to make any one impatient."

Julia, during this time, had been a spectator of the sportive group, with much the same feelings as the prisoner, who through his bars beholds the free and the happy.

"Ah!" said she, "how merry they all are! No one thinks of me, I dare say."

At this moment she thought she perceived some one ascend the path, that wound up the bank towards the house.

"Who is that, I wonder! Who can be coming away now! Oh! I suppose it is somebody coming to take more company to the show—no one will come for poor me!"—and she leaned her head pensively against the window. She had not been long in this position, when she heard her door gently opened, and, turning round, she beheld Rose. "Is that you, Rose?" she asked, in a softened tone—"What has brought you home?"

"Nothing is the matter," said Rose; "but I could not bear to leave you here alone;—I can see the sport just as well from this window."

The tears started into Julia's eyes, and, overcome by this generosity, she exclaimed with earnestness, "I have not deserved this kindness, Rose, after treating you so ill this afternoon;—I cannot let you stay,—go, go: you ought to be happy, for you are always good."

"Don't say any thing more about it," said Rose; "I shall enjoy myself a great deal more here: my heart felt like lead when I was down there; but now 'tis as light as a feather."

This was no more than true. Animated by the consciousness of acting rightly, she was sensible of no loss; and, putting her arm kindly round her cousin's waist, she placed herself by her side.

"*But say,*" cried Julia, "say that you forgive

me; and, believe me, I never will be so cross and unreasonable again."

"I do, I do," replied Rose: "so don't let us say another word about it. Oh!" cried she, good-naturedly diminishing the value of her sacrifice, "how beautiful it looks up here! You can't see the frosted trees half so plainly on the meadow! Don't they look just like the enchanted trees that Aladdin saw, all hanging full of precious stones! There! there! now they are preparing for the race."

The night was so brilliant, and the spot so near, that they could see every object perfectly; and by well known characteristics of walk, or size, or dress, distinguish their young friends.

"Now they start!" cried Julia gayly, her mind relieved by the acknowledgment of her fault, and cheered by the presence of Rose,—"now they start! one, two, three, four, five, six boys—Rose, who is that behind?"

"That? why that is Charles Blanchard—I wonder that he should be *behind.*"

But Charles knew best how to exert his strength; and every round gained something on the improvident boys, who were too prodigal of theirs at the first.

"One, two, three rounds!" cried Rose, as the boys time after time passed the goal—"Now the

fourth, and Charles is almost at the head! five, five, five," repeated both the girls, as that course concluded—" six, six—and Charles leads! six, six, six," and clapping their hands simultaneously, " Charles has won! Charles has won!" broke from them at the same moment; while a burst of music from the island proclaimed the conclusion of the race;—and among all the excited happy spirits, none were more so than Rose and Julia.

The next morning after breakfast Mr. Finlay requested the girls to accompany him into his library, communicating with Julia's apartment. Rose, whose fear of him was but little abated, followed her cousin with trembling steps, wondering what terrible thing was going to happen! As soon, however, as they entered, her apprehensions were relieved, by her uncle's acknowledging that he had from this room, the previous evening, unintentionally overheard their conversation,—requiring in conclusion that they should make a full disclosure of the circumstances to which they had then alluded.

Rose looked embarrassed and remained silent, but Julia with her usual magnanimity related them minutely; and ended by saying, " Papa, Rose is always just so good and generous; and I have not treated her as I ought to have done, ever since she *came here.*"

This language of his daughter, which seemed to spring from a spirit like his own, at once gratified and humbled Mr. Finlay; and prepared him to make the concessions which he felt were due from himself likewise.

"My dear Rose," said he, with an unwonted kindness which affected her more than all that had passed, "*I* have done you injustice as well as Julia—her example teaches me what I ought to do;—give me a kiss;—and now be assured, (and no one ever relied on my word in vain,) that you and your mother shall never want a friend while I live."

LES JEUX FLORAUX.

It was the month of August. The boys belonging to the village of W——, who had been sent to seminaries in different parts of the country, had returned about the same time to pass the vacation; and their friends were emulous to render it as pleasant to them as possible. Mr. and Mrs. Laurence, whose son was of the number, and who were always well disposed to promote the happiness of the young, were among the most active on this occasion. A son about fifteen, and a daughter eighteen months younger, were their only children. To these was added the orphan child of a brother of Mrs. Laurence, whom they had adopted on the death of her parents. Jane Russel was nearly the same age as Grace Laurence, and entire harmony had subsisted between them. At this time their family circle was enlarged by the addition of Frank

Harvey, a friend of their son: their intimacy had been formed at school, and Eugene had brought him to pass a part of his vacation at W——. These, with a nephew of Mr. Laurence, Clement Arnold, who resided in the same village, formed a group, combining all the attractions of youth, intelligence, and good humour.

Seasons of relaxation, which, in the common opinion, are interruptions to the mighty business of education, Mr. and Mrs. Laurence thought, if well employed, of no mean importance in furthering it; and endeavoured, while they rendered them delightful, to make them subservient to improvement; more particularly to the cultivation of that courtesy and gentleness of deportment, to which public schools are, in general, so unfriendly. That the intercourse of the young people of different sexes, indispensable to the attainment of this object, should be equally removed from *mauvaise honte* and vulgar familiarity, they, themselves, mingled in all their pleasures, sanctioned their harmless gayety, and checked the rude effervescence of their spirits not so much by rigid precepts and austere demeanour, as by giving them a taste for more refined enjoyments: and never were Mr. and Mrs. Laurence better pleased, than in witnessing the natural and unrestrained expression of their innocent sym-

pathies. On a bright Sunday morning, as they returned from church, they would remark, with a benevolent satisfaction, the happy young creatures around them. These, with due sobriety, had attended their respective parents on their way thither; had, with meek and reverential looks, regarded the pastor, and had mingled their voices in the strain of praise and thanksgiving, which rose from the choir. But the service over, the blessing pronounced, and the aisle slowly and decorously paced down to where the large unfolding doors permitted egress to the throng, the instincts of youth and good will could no longer be repressed: and it may be doubted if their feet were always well removed from holy ground, before the cordial salutation and sprightly smile were given and returned. Then, grouping themselves as the habits of particular intimacy suggested, they would soon outstrip the graver part of the congregation.

"There they go!" cried Mrs. Laurence one day; "the green sward looks as if it were sprinkled with flowers,—so gay are the girls in their new bonnets."

"'Tis not the girls alone," replied Mr. Laurence, "whose vanity is abroad this morning:—Alexander Hughes has come out in his uniform, too; and, although the boys last evening affected to laugh

at his passion for his military school, and military costume, I dare say, that they have made themselves as smart as their citizens' dress will allow."

"Under proper regulations, however, you would not condemn attention to dress?"

"Certainly not—even the excess is better than the want of it; and, though I should regret such an alternative, I would rather see my son, at fifteen, something of a fop, than a *sloven*—time, in all probability, will correct the first, while it renders the last incurable. It would nevertheless, I think, be as well that Sunday attire were only distinguished by neatness and simplicity. If the girls, therefore, (they are more apt, you will own, to err in this particular,) have any thing very tasteful, let them reserve it for occasions when it will be more appropriate. But I will not be cynical—there are, after all, few things so pleasant to me as the sight of a country congregation, their good appearance, and their friendly greetings. Every face is that of a friend or an acquaintance. Some have put on their best feelings with their best clothes, others are influenced by personal regards, and many are actuated by higher motives, and extend their sympathies to every individual as to a fellow worshipper."

Mrs. Laurence accorded with her husband, and *they walked* a few moments in silence.

"Who is that?" asked Mr. Laurence, "that has just overtaken Jane?"

"I don't know," replied she, "but I suppose 'tis Clement. There is something beautiful to me, in the regard these two children have always manifested for each other. Don't you remember when she first came to live with us, (then a little thing!) the air of kindness and protection with which he, although but a year older, seemed always to consider her?"

"Yes, I do—their situation, in some respects similar, appeared to unite them."

"They have, too," said Mrs. Laurence, "such a similarity of mind and temper, that they are fitted to be friends. She is one of the gentlest and best, and the sweet influences of his mother's character are very apparent in Clement. Such a son is a sufficient reward for the years of sickness and sorrow it has pleased Providence to allot to her. How often when I have entered her darkened room, and seen Clement reading by the feeble light which the nearly closed shutter admitted—her constant and unwearied attendant—administering her medicines, and guarding her from all noise and intrusion,—or, have found him of an evening contentedly getting his lesson by her night lamp, for the

pleasure of being in her room, have I thought her the most enviable mother I knew!"

"He is a fine boy!" said Mr. Laurence, "and, though the only child of his mother, and she a widow, is not spoilt in the least; and that is saying a good deal both for her and him."

"I believe," continued Mrs. Laurence, "I did not tell you of a graceful action of his lately. He has, you know, always called Jane 'sister;' and on her birth-day, when several of her young friends were giving her little tokens of regard, (for she is the general favourite,) Clement presented her a pretty embossed ring, within which was inscribed '*mon frère;*' and I afterwards found from Mrs. Arnold that he had denied himself several little gratifications, that he might appropriate his spending money to this object."

"And how did Jane receive it?"

"Oh! very gratefully, to be sure—but she nevertheless availed herself of her *sister's* privilege, to advise him against such a use of his money; which she, with her usual moderation, thought very unnecessary."

Although sport and recreation claimed a due portion of their time, Frank and Eugene did not entirely neglect things of greater importance. Both

were intelligent and cultivated; and, strange as it may seem to some boys, were willing to use rationally, a part of that time which such youngsters are apt to think they have a *right* to waste because it is *their own*.

One evening, as they were seated round the centre table, the girls drawing, and Frank looking over their port-folios, and making his criticisms, which they regarded as nothing worth, seeing he was one of the uninitiated,—Eugene turning his eyes from a book in which he had been reading, suddenly exclaimed, "Mother, you ought to hear this; it would hit your fancy exactly. M. Sismondi mentions here, the great barons of Provence, inviting to '*la cour plénière*' other lords and their vassals; and that three days were given to jousts and tournaments. He then goes on to say, speaking of *la dame du chateau*, '*Elle ouvrait*—'"

"Oh, do translate it, Eugene!" cried Grace; "you know what the poor French gentleman said to Mrs. Clark, when she thought she was speaking away so finely—'Madame, I understand your *English* better than I do your *French*.'"

"Well, well," replied Eugene; "have it as you please."

'She opened——'

"She! what she? what are you talking of, Eugene?"

"Why, the lady of the castle, Grace, you don't attend."

"Oh, yes! now I understand; now go on."

Eugene again opened his book, and translated as follows:

'She opened afterwards in her turn *her* tribunal; and as the baron was surrounded by his peers to render justice, she formed her court, '*La cour d'amour*,' of the young ladies most brilliant for beauty and talents. A new career was then opened for those who dared to combat, not in arms, but in verse.'—"M. Sismondi then describes the manner in which the contest was conducted; how a subject was proposed, which one would attack, and another defend; then the grave deliberations of the 'court of Love,' and the decree by which it decided the question in dispute. Don't you think, mother, that this must have been delightful?"

"Yes, I can easily conceive, that, under the control of a pure taste, such an entertainment might be very interesting; and it is, at least, better to measure *wits* than *swords*."

Eugene was again absorbed in his book: as he proceeded, his countenance expressed how much his mind kindled at the beautiful description of the

Provençal literature. "Oh!" cried he at last, "how I should have liked to have been a Troubadour!"

His mother smiled. "That's an odd wish for a boy in the nineteenth century," said his father; "what do you find so attractive in them?"

"Oh, their devotion to every thing beautiful, and brave, and courteous!"

"I think," said his mother, laughing, "if I recollect right, that in one of these same poetical combats, one of the greatest lords, and one of the bravest captains, accused each other of perjury, and of having robbed on the highway."

"Oh, I suppose there were some base and craven knights, of course, or there would have been no work for the rest."

"Jane," said Frank, looking at an India ink sketch with a quizzical air, holding it first in one light, then in another, inclining his head now to the right, and now to the left, "Jane, do tell me whether this is sky or water?"

"It is not mine," replied Jane, smiling; "you must ask Grace."

Grace, at these words, turned to Frank.

"'Tis no wonder you can't tell," said she; "you have got it upside down."

"Well, but I've held it both ways, and still I

cannot make it out,—perhaps, though, 'tis a sort of a changeable view, like some heads that are alternately an old man with a cocked hat, or an old lady in her night-cap,—as you choose to hold them—for see! this is now a boat sailing through the water, I suppose—but hold it so, 'tis a great spread eagle flying through the air."

"Frank, where are your eyes? don't you see that 'tis neither a boat nor an eagle, but a wagon; and that what you call water or sky, is neither the one nor the other, but a road."

"A wagon! I can see no wheels, at any rate."

"Why, yes, there are wheels, Frank,—not very plain, to be sure; but then 'tis in the distance—you can't expect to see things in the distance."

"What do you mean by in the distance?" said he, with affected surprise and ignorance; "is not it in the picture, and have I not the picture in my hands? —nay, don't be so flurried, Grace, I only ask for information."

"Well, then," said Grace, in sober earnest, while Frank, winking at Jane, listened to her with well feigned attention,—"this paper does not, you must understand, represent a flat surface,—but first a bit of fore-ground—"

"A bit of what, Grace? what kind of ground did *you say?*"

"Fore-ground."

"Oh, yes—I understand—such ground, I suppose, as I never saw before."

"And then," said Grace, not hearing his comment, "a little beyond is a house, and a turnpike-gate—and then the other side of the gate—perhaps a mile from me—is a wagon—now isn't that in the distance?"

"Yes, yes, that's plain—any thing a mile off is at a distance. But I should think, Grace, that there was more than a mile's distance, from the difference in the climate between here and there."

"Difference of climate, Frank!—what do you mean?"

"Why, I should think there were two inches of snow the other side of the gate, and on this side 'tis all bare ground—as black as ink."

"Don't you know things look lighter when they are far off?"

"Yes, I know that much; but I never saw the time when I could not tell whether it were snow or mud a mile a-head—though, to be sure, I'm no judge of a picture, as you say, Grace;—at any rate, however, I should think, from the state of the roads, that your gate should be left open—'tis too much to make people pay toll for such traveling."

Here, undeceived by a laugh from Jane and Frank, Grace turned abruptly away.

"Nonsense!" exclaimed she; "I shall not waste another word upon you—give me my port-folio;—you have no more taste than—"There! there's one of Jane's—see what sort of a conundrum you can make out of that."

"Let's see;—here's a tin lantern, standing on a loaf of bread, in a basin of milk—that may be a fine picture, for aught that I know, but I don't call it nice house-keeping."

"Oh, shocking!" cried Jane; "it is a light-house on a rock in the ocean! you have treated me worse even than you did Grace."'

Eugene again attracted attention to his book.

"Mother, you must hear me once more: 'A circular letter was addressed to all the cities of Languedoc by the magistrates of Toulouse, to announce, that, on the first day of May, 1324, they would decree a golden violet, as a recompense to the author of the best piece of poetry in the Provençal language. The concourse at the time appointed was prodigious. The magistrates, nobility, and people, were assembled in the garden of the Augustins to hear the public reading of the pieces presented for the prize. Such was the commencement of *Les Jeux Floraux.*'"

"This interests me more, Eugene," replied his mother, "than the *cour d'amour*. It was dictated by a love of country, which sought to revive the art which had been its chief glory. These 'Floral games,' I think your author further says, exist to this day; and though no men of genius seek distinction in them, they have something pleasing to me as a remnant of a poetic age. But your genuine Troubadours were extinct, I believe, when these games were instituted."

Eugene sat thoughtfully for some moments. "It seems to me," at length said he, "that ours is a very dull matter-of-fact sort of life."

"Your own mind, my boy," said his father, "will, I'll engage, supply illusions enough."

"I see, Eugene," said his mother, "that you have a great fancy for some of these fine things of which you are reading—what would you say to a '*cour d'amour*' and '*jeux floraux*' in this very house?"

"*Cour d'amour! jeux floraux!*" echoed all the girls and Frank, "how charming! but how can it be?"

"Oh! by a little ingenuity and combination I suspect we can effect it. The 'court of Love' seems to have been instituted for the purpose of deciding such questions, as were proposed for dis-

cussion before it, and the only reward appears to have been the favourable decree of the fair ladies who sat in judgment;—but we must have a *prize*, to stimulate our juvenile efforts; and instead of a grave bench of magistrates we will have '*jeunes dames:*'—and the '*cour d'amour*' shall award the prize in '*les jeux floraux.*' "

"Oh, excellent! excellent!" exclaimed Eugene.

"We are," said Mrs. Laurence, "rather too far advanced in the season. August is not so poetical a month as May."

"*Our* August, though, mother, is I dare say no more than equivalent to *their* May."

"Just so, I dare say—now we must choose our court. I, as *dame du chateau*, have a right to preside in it; but I will wave that privilege for the more humble office of mistress of ceremonies:—we can, however, be at no loss for a '*cour d'amour*' I suppose?"

"Oh! no," cried Frank, with a knowing glance at the girls. "Jane and Grace will not do alone, mother," said Eugene; "we must have another—let's see—Caroline Grey."

"Yes, yes, Caroline Grey—she's the very girl," they exclaimed.

"And now for the competitors," said Mrs. Laurence,—"here's Frank, and you Eugene,—and we

must have Alexander Hughes, and Clement Arnold—I have no doubt Clement will do very well; I have heard his mother say that he has quite a taste for poetry."

"Oh! yes; he'll be a rare hand," replied Eugene, "I don't know how Alexander Hughes will like the plan."

"I'll answer for him," said Frank: "he's always ready to *attempt* any thing;—and if he fails he'll bear it like a brave fellow! Then there's Albert Tracy—why wo'n't he do?"

"Sure enough!" cried Eugene; "Albert by all means, he is the greatest spouter of heroics in the whole school; and the last fourth of July, when the boys celebrated the day, he spoke a piece of his own composition, which was greatly applauded."

"If I remember," said Mr. Laurence, who, though hitherto silent, had not been inattentive, "the 'court of Love' discussed not only the merits of the poets as such, but the merits of the subject of their verse. Now, as I think '*les jeunes dames*' will have enough to do with the former, the graver part of the business I will undertake. So I warn you, boys, to choose well your topics; for I shall not spare you. Give us none of your heathen gods and goddesses;—leave them to repose on the pages of Homer and Ovid till you return to school,

and sing of something that belongs to ourselves, and which will interest your audience."

"And now for the prize, father," said Grace.

"I need not remind young gentlemen, who are presumed to have the classics at their tongues' end," replied Mr. Laurence, "of the simple crowns of laurel, olive, and parsley, with which the ancients rewarded the competitors in their games."

"Oh, mercy!" cried Grace, with a disappointed look, "they will never do."

"No, no, I dare say;—you degenerate moderns will not be satisfied with so simple a testimonial—but, instead of a *golden* violet, a silver jasmine, or an acacia, which, I believe, were afterwards added in these games, as rewards for excellence in the different descriptions of poetry, I promise to the successful candidate, a handsomely set cornelian seal, whose device shall be the violet. This flower is not only an appropriate trophy on this occasion, but, being the emblem of modesty and friendship, seems also an expression of the dispositions in which, I doubt not, your efforts will be made."

They all declared, that the reward was more than sufficient—the next thing was the time.

"I should be loath to hurry too much such young aspirants," said Mr. Laurence; "but if I might humbly advise, I should say that you could be ready in a week—if ever."

To this also they agreed.

"As to the place," said Mrs. Laurence, "this parlour must supply to you the garden of the Augustins; as it will, I suppose, contain the privileged few that you will choose to admit to these mysteries."

Another important circumstance was decided upon: entire secrecy was to be observed, as to the authors, until the judgment was pronounced; and then only the victor would be required to disclose himself. Instead of reading their own productions, they were to be deposited in a vase, whence they were to be taken, and read by Mr. Laurence;—thus the feelings of the boys would be spared, and the best effect given to the several pieces.

The next thing was to apprize their young friends of the honours awaiting them, and to invite such persons to be present as would feel an interest in the trial.

And now, though Rhyming Dictionaries, and various other helps by which they hoped to sustain their young pinions in their adventurous flight, were in great demand, the votaries of the Muses were not so engrossed by them as to forego their woodcraft, fishing, and other ordinary pursuits. Although rivals for the meed of poesy, they adhered most lovingly to each other,—Alexander and Albert being

daily visiters; and seldom were they together that the nerves of the girls were not shocked by preparations for country sports; Grace, especially, who could never see fishing tackle, or a gun, without thinking of Eugene as either drowned or shot.

"I always supposed," said Caroline Grey to her one morning, when Grace, with her usual solicitude, was observing the fearful equipment of the boys; "I always supposed that your distress was about the poor fish and birds. It appears to me that *they* are in much greater danger than Eugene."

"Oh, dear, no! that I'm sure they are not! at least, not from him; for he can never bring down a bird, or bring up a fish. Alexander says Eugene may well call it '*going-a-shooting;*' for all he does is to fire when the rest do, whether he sees any thing or not; and, as to fishing, the old blind negro who sits all day long under the bridge, bobbing for one pickerel, is more than a match for him."

One afternoon, when Jane was occupied in her room, Grace entered with an important look.

"Jane," said she, "those boys are after some mischief; what it is I have not yet discovered; but I will, if possible. They are all closeted in Eugene's study. I saw from the garden, just now, *Alexander Hughes* carry in a singular-looking wood-

en machine, which Frank and Eugene received very mysteriously. Clement, at the same time, arrived with a quantity of paste-board; and, as the door was partly opened, I could see Albert very much engaged with some curious looking rollers."

"But why do you suspect mischief?"

"Because, when I approached the window, I smelt gunpowder, and all sorts of odious things."

"Gunpowder!" exclaimed Jane, with the usual female apprehension on that subject; "but I dare say they are only cleaning their guns."

"No, no,—no such thing. I could see through the window that Eugene's table was covered with little black lumps of something, and that he had on his apron with which he works in those hateful '*chemicals*,' as he calls them,—his quicksilver, his acids, his manganese, his fulminating powders, and what not! My only comfort is, that his pneumatic cistern will not hold water, and that his retorts always crack before his gas is obtained, or mercy knows what would become of us! I've scarce had any peace since the time he singed off his eye-lashes boiling alcohol, and since the night last winter that I found phosphorus burning in his study."

"Burning in his study! you never told me that, Grace."

"Didn't I?—the careless creature had, indeed, for a wonder, thought so far as to put it in water—but that was all;—he hadn't the sense to reflect that the water would freeze, burst the phial, and let in the air—and so I found it."

"But tell me what you are now afraid of."

"Why, I *know*," replied Grace, with emphasis. "I *know* that the boys are at work at some of these things, and the first that we shall know is, they'll be all exploded."

"*Exploded!*" cried Jane, laughing, "you are so filled with these fears, Grace, that I should think your brain would explode:—but you say Clement is there, and he is always discreet."

"Oh, I don't know about Clement," replied Grace; "he's a boy as well as they; and I'll be bound he is very different when he is with you and me, or with them."

Grace, finding no sympathy in her fears, returned to reconnoitre. Cautiously winding her way through a row of syringas and lilacs, she approached the study window, which looked into the garden; and attained a little elevation, whence she could look into the apartment situate on the ground floor. But her white dress had already betrayed her to Frank Harvey, and her step and attitude sufficiently convicted her of *espionage*. Frank, considering this equiva-

lent to a declaration of hostility, and regarding all stratagems and reprisals as fair in war, took his station, accordingly, just within the window, and, by partly unfolding the shutter, screened himself from her view, while he could still watch her movements.

Grace, intent on her object, was advancing with cautious steps, when she heard Eugene say, "I am sure 'tis the same powder we used the last time we were out; but if you don't think it good, Alexander, you can easily dry a little on my furnace here."

At the thought of drying *gunpowder* on a *furnace*, Grace was beside herself! and seeing in her imagination, nothing less than the house blown up, and Eugene flying through the air, she rushed forwards screaming with terror; and presenting herself at the window, implored the boys to stop. At this instant Frank, darting from his covert, dared to impress on her cheek a kiss!

Gunpowder—conflagration—dismembered boys—were in an instant forgotten. Her face, before pale with fright, was now flushed with indignation, and, stepping back, she exclaimed, "how dare you, Frank?" But he, exulting in his success, clapped his hands and cried, "spies have no right to complain!"

"No, that they have not!" exclaimed Eugene, "'tis all fair, Frank! 'tis all fair!"

"The enemy is repulsed!" cried Alexander, in the spirit of a garrison that had withstood an assault.

"You seem *blown up* yourself, Grace!" exclaimed her brother, as, under the influence of her returning fears, she, notwithstanding her resentment, besought him to desist from his employment, and even threatened to appeal to her mother.

"We are all free and independent here," cried Albert; "no '*mother* country' for us!"

"I have plenty of ammunition left," said Frank, "if the enemy returns."

"Perhaps she'll make a descent in a different quarter," said Eugene, looking at another window.

"Never mind," said Alexander; "Frank can play a *barbet* if she does; and I'll take my post in this *horn-work*," continued he, quoting his newly acquired terms of fortification, and pointing to an angle of the room, which projected into the garden, in which was a glass door, "I'll engage to make that good against her."

"It seems to me," said Clement, who had not spoken, and who alone seemed to compassionate

Grace's situation, "it would be more generous to sound a parley, and perhaps we may come to terms."

But Grace was now too resentful for any accommodation, and, hastening to her room, threw herself into her chair, and actually cried with mortification.

"'Tis a shame!" exclaimed she at last, in reply to Jane's urgent request for explanation; "'tis a shame of the boys to insult me, when I only went for their own good! they might have known that I did not want to pry into their silly affairs;—but they may do what they please now; I shall not trouble myself any more about them."

She then gave Jane an account of the whole affair, who, though more calm than Grace, was scarcely less offended.

"And, did they *all* take part in this vulgar sport?" asked Jane.

"Yes, all—that is, they all laughed, and enjoyed my confusion."

"I should not have thought that Clement would have done so."

"Didn't I tell you, Jane, he was just like all the rest?—boys never seem to have any sense, not even the best of them."

Jane did not controvert an opinion which has

unfortunately too much foundation; but, hoping to divert Grace from the consideration of the indignity she had received, she reminded her that they were to go that afternoon to see Jemima Merrill, a poor girl who was languishing in a consumption, and who, not more from her poverty than her exemplary conduct, had been the object of much compassion and attention in the village.

Grace, however, declined. She feared to encounter the boys, and begged Jane to go without her; the latter accordingly, with a little basket on her arm, containing some presents for the invalid, set out on her walk. As she passed the garden gate, Clement opened it, and addressed her with an inquiry as to where she was going.

She answered him, very coldly, "Not far."

"So much the better, then, for I can go with you."

"No, you can't, for I prefer to be alone."

"It seems to me that my *sister* is not so polite as usual this afternoon," said he.

"I'm quite as polite as my *brother*," replied she.

"Why, hey-day, Jane! *you* capricious! that's what I never should have expected."

"We are often disappointed in our opinion of others," answered Jane, and, quickening her pace, *escaped from* her companion; who remarked her al-

tered manner with the more interest as she never indulged in whims of any kind.

"Ah, well!" said he, with a shrug half sentimental and half philosophical, "girls are, after all, pretty much alike."

Jane, with considerable self-complacency at the dignity so properly manifested, proceeded to the dwelling of Jemima.

It was a pleasant sight to see her little chamber. Her mother, though the evils of poverty were aggravated by an unkind and intemperate husband, who suffered her, wholly unassisted by himself, to support a large family, never neglected any thing for the comfort of her sick child, which her own industry, care, or self-denial could obtain. Her room was kept in perfect order;—no soil defaced the floor; and the little window which admitted the cheering sun-beams, was never allowed to be obscured by neglect. Her rocking-chair was made easy and pleasant to her by cushions, covered with cloth patch-work, and her bed, though coarse, was always clean. A table on which were placed her medicines, refreshments, and two or three books, was covered with a nice white "bird's eye" towel, of her mother's own spinning and weaving. A wooden clock was permitted to remain in one corner of the room, because Jemima said it was com-

pany; and that when she lay awake at night, its ticking seemed to compose, rather than disturb her.

"I ought not to be afraid," she would say, "to hear my minutes counted, for I am not afraid, thank God! to die."

She had, indeed, that sweet peace within, which deprived external things of their power to annoy her. She had long understood the fatal nature of her disease, which though it did not advance rapidly, was not to be mistaken; yet her chief troubles were, the misconduct of her father, and the fatigue of her mother. Though so ill, she could still find occupation and even enjoyment;—in her intervals of ease and reviving strength, she instructed her little sister in sewing; and her Bible, which was always by her side, was a never failing source of comfort.

"How are you to day, Jemima?" asked Jane; "I am sorry not to see you in your rocking-chair."

Jemima was lying down, but she extended her hand, and replied, "pretty comfortable, I thank you."

"She is very feeble this afternoon," said her mother; "she tired herself basting Abby's pieces, and she sat up all the forenoon, which was too much for her."

"I must expect to be worse, mother," said Jemi-

ma; "'tis only a wonder I'm spared so long. If I could choose," said she, turning to Jane, "I should say it would be well that I should not last much longer. Mother will be quite worn out—she gets no rest at night, and little quiet or comfort during the day."

"That's no grief to me for my own sake," said Mrs. Merrill. "I can truly say the last three months have been the happiest in my life, for it seems to me that Mimey's room is heaven!—when I come in here, and see her so patient, and so kind, and so full of faith and hope, I forget all my troubles. Oh, my dear child!" continued she, earnestly to Jane, "I hope you will get religion early, as Mimey did. There's the Bible Mrs. Arnold gave her ten years ago, when she was just about your age, and there is not a day since, I'm sure, that she has not read in it;—and see for all that how nice she has kept it!"

"Yes," said Jemima, "every body gives to me;—clothes, or books, or comforts of some kind. Look there in that window," said she with a smile;—Jane approached, and saw, in a flower-pot, a fine plant of lavender.

"I thought," said she, "I perceived something sweet—where did this come from Jemima?"

"Why, I happened to tell Clement Arnold one day, when his mother sent him with some fruit to

me, that I longed to have something green growing in my room, that I might take care of it, as I used to do of the larkspurs and pinks in the garden, when I was well; and that as our folks had no flower seeds now, I had got them when they were planting peas to put them in a box to stand in my window; and what does he do, but bring this beautiful sweet flower to me the next day! You know his mother has a great many plants, and, as she is often sick, he takes the chief care of them, and knows all about them. Every now and then he comes to see how this grows, too, as he says—but he never comes empty-handed, for all that."

"That's just like Clement," said Jane; "and I have brought you something, too; but it is not so pretty as this lavender bush;" and, opening her bag, she produced a neat muslin cap, trimmed with delicate blue ribands.

Jemima cast an admiring glance at it.

"'Tis too pretty for me," said she.

"Don't say so," replied Jane; "I thought it would just suit you,—you like so to be neat; and you know, Jemima," continued she, pleasantly, "nobody in the whole village has so much company as you; so you ought to have a nice cap to receive your visiters. I wo'n't try it on now, because *you are tired*, but the next time I come I will;

and then, with a sprig of Clement's lavender in your bosom, I am sure you will look sweetly."

Jemima, though she caught the contagion of Jane's smile, shook her head; but her mother, delighted at this attention to her child, and who yet clung to the poor wasting body about which Jemima herself was becoming so indifferent, promised that she should wear it, and Jane soon after, bidding them farewell, commenced her walk homewards. As she crossed a little bridge, Clement suddenly appeared from within the shade of one of the abutments.

"Ah, ha! Jane," cried he, "I have way-laid you!"

"I see you have," she replied; but now in better humour with him, she thought it would be more friendly to expostulate on his conduct to Grace, than to treat him as she had at first done. She therefore permitted him to join her, and frankly expressed her opinion as to the scene in the study. This furnished Clement an opportunity of justifying himself, which he did; declaring his disapprobation to be no less than hers, and Jane undertook to rectify Grace's misconstruction of his conduct.

When the family met at tea, Grace was very grand and unapproachable, Jane answered only in monosyllables, and Frank found that he had taken a liberty which would not soon be forgiven.

The evening was close and oppressive, and the girls strolled off, unperceived, to catch a breath of air on the lawn. They had not been long there before Eugene followed.

"Now, girls," said he, "this is too absurd! to make such a pother about a trifle!"

"I don't think it a trifle," said Jane, gravely.

"That's very fine talking of you, Eugene," said Grace; "but you should remember that, if you are so intimate with Frank, I have not known him more than a fortnight."

"Oh, capital!" cried he; "then you mean to say, that if you had been better acquainted—another fortnight, for instance—you would have made no objection."

"I don't mean any such thing, Eugene, and you know I don't—I only mean that, therefore, 'tis the greater liberty for him to take."

"If he had known you better, dear Grace," said Jane, "he would not have done so,—and that, at least, is some excuse for him, and some comfort to you."

"I don't want any comfort," replied Grace; "I only don't want to speak again to him while he is here."

"Ridiculous!" exclaimed her brother.

"*You know*, Eugene," said Jane, "that you *would not* have done so."

"I am not sure of that," replied he; "thanks to mother, and I suppose I may add to the society of two such *exquisites* as you and Grace, I, perhaps, have some ideas of delicacy, propriety, and all that, which Frank, unfortunately, may not yet have acquired; but I might have forgotten them, notwithstanding. And, I must say, that it is a very vexatious thing to have all one's motions watched, as if one were always in danger of doing some ridiculous thing. 'Where are you going, Eugene?' says mother, when I rise from the breakfast or dinner table. 'Are you going out?' cries Jane, if she sees me take up my hat—'Oh! what are you going to do?' screams Grace, if I whistle to Ranger. I can't move, but forty thousand women are calling after me, as if I were an idiot or a madman. Then, if we boys get into my study to do any thing privately, heavens and earth! one would think another gunpowder-plot were hatching."

"Well, I'm sure 'tis no wonder," replied Grace, "you are so careless."

"So careless!—I've never killed myself or any one else yet—how happens that, if I'm so careless?"

"I'm sure that's more than I can tell."

"But come now, girls, be reasonable. I'll own Frank did wrong, and I told him so a few moments after; though at first, I could not help laughing at

the joke; but he is a good fellow, and my friend and visiter; and I cannot consent that his pleasure be spoiled—so let's bury the hatchet. After our floral game, your curiosity (for you must confess, Grace, that urged you on) shall be satisfied. Besides, you'll break up the game, I fear, if you don't accept Frank's apology."

"I have not heard it yet," said Jane.

"Nor I," said Grace.

"Bless my heart, have I forgotten it all this time! Well, then, he desired me to say that he begs your pardon; but that if he had not supposed that you presented your cheek on purpose, he never ——"

"On purpose! abominable! no, I'll never forgive it!"

"Eugene! Eugene! don't tease her so," cried Jane; "he did not say so, I'm sure."

"No, no,—he did not.—He most submissively, and with unfeigned repentance, craves your forgiveness."

Jane beginning to suspect that too much importance might be given to the affair, commissioned Eugene to announce that *she* was mollified: but Grace, uncertain how far she might safely trust to his mediation, would not depart from her dignified position.

So matters stood till the day appointed for "*Les*

jeux floraux." Every afternoon, in the meantime, the boys were in full conclave in the study; and, although Grace was just dead to find out what they could be about, she obtained no clue. Wednesday afternoon arrived, and 8 o'clock found the party assembled in Mrs. Laurence's parlour. The "*cour d'amour*" occupied a sofa, in front of which was a table, supporting the important vase, and an astral lamp, that shed a soft light on the fair tribunal; the girls, dressed with simplicity, without other ornaments than natural flowers, disposed tastefully among their curls, looked like rural divinities. In front of them, was the post assigned to Mr. Laurence, and the company, consisting of the immediate friends of the competitors, were seated with them around the room. Mrs. Laurence commenced the entertainment of the evening by a sprightly overture on her piano; and as she concluded, her husband drew from the vase a paper, containing the following lines:—

My muse, like war-horse, smells afar
The battle, and she cries ha! ha!
The distant trumpet hearing,
The war-cry loudly cheering,
And all the glorious clang of war.

Speed, speed the time, when in the fray
My maiden sword shall seek its prey;

When in the mingled fighting,
All cries for mercy slighting,
My reckless arm my foes shall slay.

Where war her bloody standard rears,
Her splendid crest of glittering spears,
Where cannons deeply sounding,
And hostile balls far bounding,
Proclaim the strife of brave compeers,

There would I gladly gain a name
Should live on long and loud acclaim.
Oh! who would yield the glory,
Of praise in warlike story,
For peaceful and unlaurell'd fame!

Mr. Laurence ceased, and the court were seen to confer.

"Bow! wow! wow!" whispered Grace to her colleagues—"I know that's Alexander Hughes:—

And if he's such a pepper-pot,
It matters not how soon he's shot.

there, my 'impromptu,' as Eugene would call it, is as good as this flourishing affair of his, I'm sure."

"Hush! hush!" said Caroline; "we are to have no opinion till all are read."

Again, Mr. Laurence extended his hand, and *having drawn* forth another paper, read thus:—

Oh, let me my youthful afflictions deplore!
Some comfort, at least, 'tis to tell them all o'er.
That age I've attain'd, when all boys would be men;
(*Men* have sigh'd, I have heard, to be *boys* once again,)
And a taste I have got for squires, and for knights,
And in high-born distinctions my bosom delights;
But no land is less fitting for this than our own,—
From Georgia to Maine not a lord is there known!
Do you ask what it is, that my spirit thus pains?
'Tis the want of respect, which here so obtains;
The obsequious attendance, that much I admire,
(And sure 'tis no more than I well may require,)
For if I would ride, horse! horse! I might call
Like Richard the Third,—but no horse at all
Would come at my summons;—and vex'd I repair
To the stable, to saddle and bridle him there,
Nor is this the worst, I must *curry* him too,
If Jones thinks he's something more needful to do.
E'en the maids, whom you'd think I might strike with some awe,
Are the sauciest gypsies that ever you saw!
Not dazzled, as though in the blaze of the sun,
They rudely reply, or they flout every one.
And this tho' my blood is of gentle degree,
As prov'd by a genealogical tree.
But what use are devices, and helmet, and shield,
Where all have an equal, if not the same *field?*
As useless are hatchments, supporters, and crest,
Where each finds *support* without thought of the rest.
Then frankly I own it, though harsh it may be,
Where they're *gentlemen all*—'tis no land for *me!*

As Mr. Laurence read the concluding line, the court again held secret consultation.

"Eugene's! I'll bet any thing," said Grace;—"mother's always laughing at him for his high notions."

"Besides," said Jane, "I found him the other day poring over an article on Heraldry, in the Encyclopedia."

"'Tis better than the first, I think," said Caroline, "but hush! here's another,"—and Mr. Laurence read as follows:—

Columbia! how my thoughts expand
In dwelling on thy favoured land!
Kingdoms and Empires, since thy birth,
No longer sway the subject earth;
Truths of thy teaching break their chains,
And Reason only holds the reins.
First in arts, and arms, and laws,
Thy tribute is the world's applause!
And when the nations now so great,
Shall fall beneath the stroke of fate,
Thy sons, o'er all, shall rise to fame,
Thy daughters glory in thy name!

"Oh, worse and worse!" said Grace, softly; "'*thy*,' and '*thy*,' and '*thy*,' and '*thy*'—how I should like to hear our French master read this!"

"It must be the fag-end of Albert's fourth of July oration," said Caroline.

They would probably have reduced this very patriotic effusion to atoms, but Mr. Laurence called their

attention to the next, by saying, "this piece, I perceive, is entitled, 'A word to the wise'—I suppose, therefore, that it is of private interpretation."

The girls looked at each other, the boys were observed to exchange smiles, and Mr. Laurence began—

Ah! can I forbear, such a moment as this,
Forgiveness to gain, for what's deem'd so amiss!
Implore for me, judges, so fair, and so just,
My cause to your efforts I willingly trust.
My fault I can't speak, though sure 'tis so small,
I ne'er should have thought it was any at all;
But though *I* can't tell it, ask *Grace*, at your side,
She's far too indignant my errors to hide.
But suppose now 'twas only the theft of a kiss,
Le diable! would *you* make a fuss about this?
Perhaps though 'twas *stealing* that anger'd her so,
And that justice thus clouds up her beautiful brow;
Then tell her in future her kisses to *give*,
And I'll ne'er *steal* another as long as I live.
What, affronted again! how under the sun
Can I pardon obtain for what I have done?
Oh, give me but that, with a glance of those eyes,
And the deuce, or the boys, may run off with the prize!

Grace was all colours during the reading of this address. She had not acquainted her mother with Frank's offence out of pure kindness; unwilling to mar the pleasure of his visit, by exciting displeasure against him; and she now looked timidly at Mrs.

Laurence, fearing to be involved in her censure of the action, for thus concealing it. But Eugene had in secret told all; had made Frank's peace with his mother, and obtained her permission to try this mode of propitiating Grace, who had resisted all other overtures. Mrs. Laurence knew, therefore, how to understand her daughter's look, and by a smile of much meaning, relieved her apprehensions. The application was not exactly understood by the company, though the countenances of the boys, and conscious glances of the girls, sufficiently indicated something interesting.

"There seems," said Mr. Laurence, "considerable sensation excited by this piece; but whether of approbation or the reverse, I cannot understand. As there is still another, I will with permission pass on to that"—and he read the following:

As through the garden walk I wound,
Mid flow'rs both sweet and rare,
My careless eye I cast around
Upon a rose's stem, and found
A *graft* inserted there.

I watch'd it,—and it daily grew,
And put forth leaf and bud;
As from the parent stalk it drew,
By nature's laws, so kind and true,
Support and fitting food.

But as this bud its leaves unclose,
Of different race 'tis shown;
Unlike its lovely sister rose,
A veil of moss around it grows,
A beauty all its own.

And Jane, methinks that such *thou* art,
Upon the parent tree.
Whate'er of good that may impart,
Graces thou hast of mind, and heart,
Belong to none but thee."

It was now Jane's turn to be disconcerted.

"It needs no conjuror to tell whose that is," whispered Grace, recovered from her own confusion, by finding that another was made so conspicuous, as to divide with her the attention of the company.

"That's by far the best," said Caroline, "let it be whose it may."

"All have now been read," said Mr. Laurence, "and we wait the decision of the court. You, Miss Grey, seem in a frame of mind better qualified for so grave a duty than your coadjutors."

"So far as I can judge, Sir," replied Caroline, "the last is entitled to the prize—perhaps, though," said she, with a significant glance, "Grace may prefer the preceding piece."

"No, that I don't," replied Grace quickly, "I think the last is a great deal the best."

"Have a care, daughter," said her father, "judges must not be influenced by personal considerations, you know. If, however, as I presume to be the fact, you mean to reserve for the author, whose production you so pointedly reject, the reward he has himself preferred, neither he nor we can complain."

Grace looked down, but her countenance betrayed that her father had rightly interpreted her feelings.

"Jane, we have not yet heard your opinion," continued Mr. Laurence. "If in favour of the last, perhaps you do well to withhold it, lest you should be suspected of bribery and corruption—No answer?—Are we then to pronounce this," said he, holding up the piece last read, "entitled to the prize?"

The court bowed assent.

"Before the author avows himself," said Mr. Laurence, "I proceed to exercise the right which I originally claimed, of passing my judgment, not on the *verse*, but its *subject*. The first piece," said he, "I'll venture to declare the production of a good-tempered, generous boy, who would not wantonly hurt a fly; and the apparent indifference with which he speaks of 'slighting cries for mercy,' and of laying about him as fatally as the 'seven

champions,' is not so much his fault, as that of others, who nourish such false views of glory. I take the liberty to put him on his guard against those pernicious sentiments, and to say that I can wish for him nothing better than the fate he now scorns—'a peaceful, and unlaurell'd fame'—warning him, moreover, that the laurel *he* craves is of a poisonous species, as inimical to virtue as to life. As to the second piece, though it is bad to be too eager to fight *for* one's country, 'tis better than to quarrel *with* it. The writer of this, I take to be some young gentleman, whose vision is injured by dwelling too long on the sunny regions of romance. I advise him to turn away his eyes for a while, and by the time he is five and twenty, he will recover the proper use of them. Then he will perceive that an *American's* true dignity is more promoted by *self-dependence*, than by the possession of those artificial distinctions, which do not belong to his country. As to his genealogical tree, I must so far confess a sympathetic weakness as to allow that I do not contemn it. I counsel him, however, to regard it as an exotic, more for beauty than advantage; and to remember, that like such plants it often receives more attention than it is worth. Now to the consideration of the third piece, which is indeed of a very different complexion. We all, I am sure,

must admire the author's love of his country; but I beg him not to flatter himself that she, *exclusively*, occupies the trumpet of Fame, or to think the downfall of every other necessary to her glory. He should rather seek to rise *with* them, than *upon* them: since the amount of human happiness and prosperity cannot be increased, by simply removing it from one scale to the other. The fourth production is of so enigmatical a character, that I cannot easily comment upon it;—I only infer that the writer is conscious of some misdemeanour; but he is evidently so sensible of his fault, and has apparently been treated with so much rigour already, that I must recommend him to mercy. The success of the fifth, seems to preclude all criticism, and as I have, perhaps, now exceeded the patience of the company, I will not farther impose on it; besides which, the audience must be impatient to know the successful candidate. The author of the approved lines is requested to present himself."

Clement Arnold arose, and, advancing to the sofa. received the prize from the hand of Jane.

The discomfited boys now conferred apart for a moment, then bowed to the '*cour d'amour.*'

"We confess the justice of the decree," said Eugene, "and all the favour we beg is, that the judges will be so good as to descend from their seat of

justice, and condescend to partake of an amusement we have prepared in honour of them."

The girls, with wondering but bright faces, complied; and, accompanied by the rest of the party, they followed Eugene to the piazza, where, requesting their patience a few moments, he left them.

They waited in silence for some time.

"What can the boy mean!" exclaimed Grace.

She had hardly spoken, when a whizzing noise struck her ear, and her mind, as usual, was immediately seized by some vague terror;—but the half-uttered exclamation was checked by the ascent of a beautiful rocket! and a shout from the boys, who, shrouded in the darkness of the evening, were at no great distance, revealed to whom they were indebted for it. Rocket succeeded rocket, followed by wheels, fiery dragons, and all the varieties of brilliant and fantastic forms! and, spite of her fears, Grace enjoyed them highly. When the exhibition was at an end, the boys returned to receive the thanks due to their courtesy.

"Now, Grace," said Eugene, "the mystery is out! are you not obliged to me for increasing your pleasure by the surprise?—Besides, had I admitted you to my counsel, your foolish fears would probably have defeated all my plan. And you see, too, my dear, that I am not *blown up* after all."

"For which," said his mother, "you are probably more indebted to chance than skill."

"Well, well, mother, never mind: we that have missed the prize, should have some compensation, I'm sure."

"Yes," said his father; "that's no more than fair, Eugene; and the more especially as you have all borne your failure so well, that you really seem to have found a pleasure in being beaten."

THE END.

ERRATA.

Page 10th, line 3rd,—for "*link*" read "*blend.*"
Page 15th, line 5th,—for "*trope*" read "*trop.*"
Page 40th, line 12th,—for "*Queen Anne's*" read "*Queen Anne.*"
Page 66th, line 2nd of the poetry,—for "*head*" read "*heart.*"

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